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LENHEIM GUIDE;

Containing a full and accurate Account of the
P^{ICTURE}INGS, TAPESTRY and FURNITURE;

A PICTURESQUE TOUR OF THE
GARDENS AND PARK;

AND A
GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE CHINA GALLERY, &c.

WITH AN ESSAY ON
LANDSCAPE GARDENING.

Embellished with Views of the PALACE, and a new and elegant
Plan of the PARK.

FIFTH EDITION, IMPROVED AND ENLARGED.



HIGH LODGE.

PRICE FOUR SHILLINGS, SEWED.

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Description

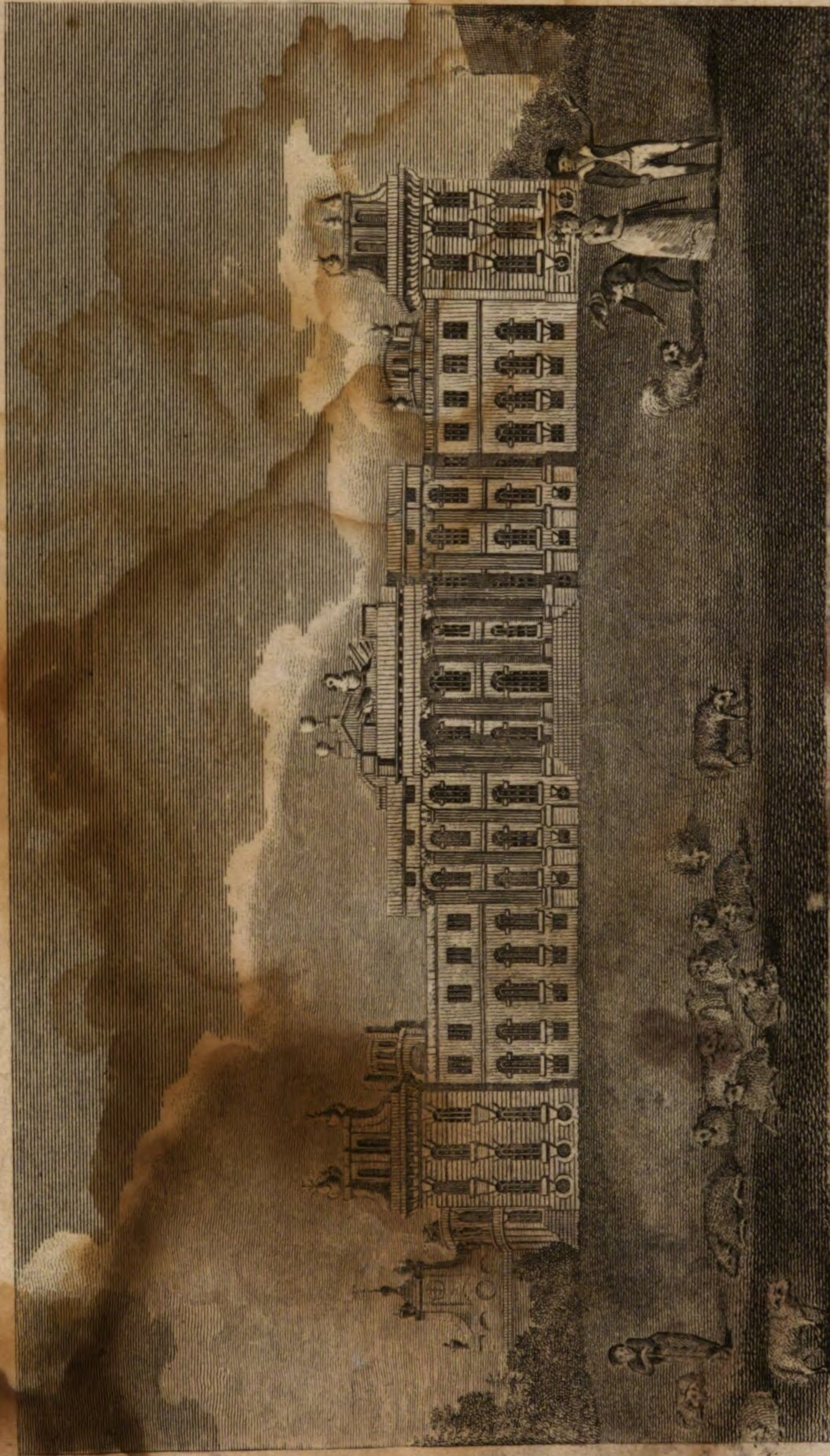
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South View of Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire, the Seat of the Duke of Marlborough.

A
NEW DESCRIPTION
OF
BLENHEIM,
THE SEAT OF HIS GRACE
THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH:
Containing a full and accurate account of the
PAINTINGS, TAPESTRY, AND FURNITURE;
A Picturesque Tour of the
GARDENS AND PARK:
And a General
DESCRIPTION OF THE CHINA GALLERY, &c.
WITH A
PRELIMINARY ESSAY
ON
LANDSCAPE GARDENING.

not the vale
Of *Tempe*, fam'd in song, nor *Ida's* grove
Such beauty boasts. LORD LYTTLETON's *Blenheim*.

NINTH EDITION, improved and enlarged.
Embellished with a new and elegant Plan of the Park, &c.

OXFORD:
PRINTED AND SOLD BY MUNDAY AND SLATTER;
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MDCCCXIV.

NEW DESCRIPTION

OR

BUTTERFIELD

THE SEAT OF HIS GRACE

THE DUCHESS OF MANTUANO

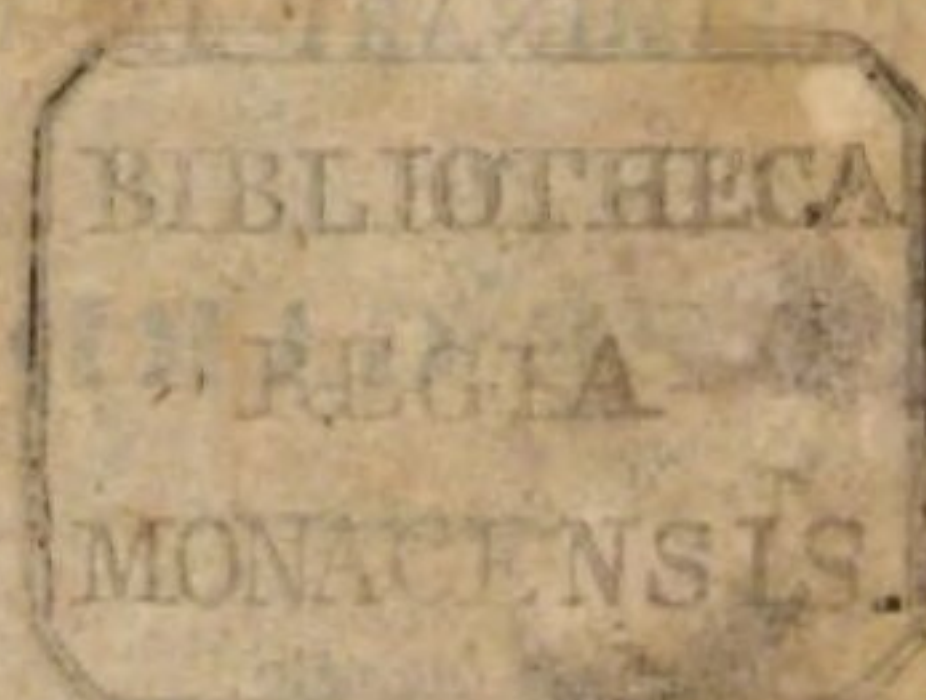
Containing a full and complete

Inventory of the Library

and of the Manuscripts

of the said Duchess

Entered at Stationers' Hall, according to Act of
Parliament.



ADVERTISEMENT.

NO publications are more entertaining or useful than local delineations and descriptions, drawn with fidelity and taste: they enable persons to form a just idea of remarkable places, to which fortune or situation denies them access; and without such aids, occasional spectators, who have not leisure to trace every beauty for themselves, must inevitably lose half the pleasure and satisfaction to be derived from their EXCURSIONS; and at best carry with them an evanescent impression, and an imperfect remembrance of what they have seen. Few places possess more attractions than Blenheim; and yet few places have received less justice from the POET or HISTORIAN.—WHEATLEY and GILPIN, who had every requisite qualification to do it justice, have only mentioned it in a cursory manner; and LYTTLETON and MANSFIELD lived too near the æra of the first Duke of MARLBOROUGH's exploits, to describe the place, farther than might serve as a vehicle for the praise of the HERO. As for those who have viewed it solely with the eyes of critics, their strictures can be of little use to the public in general: "when men begin to reason, they cease to feel" the beauties either of nature or of art.

The present work was originally intended as an attempt at more appropriate delineation ; and the Author, animated by the liberal encouragement and approbation of the public, through EIGHT very large impressions, has now revised the whole with diligent attention ; and has made such additions and alterations, as existing circumstances and a long acquaintance with the subject, seemed to require.

He has been the more anxious to do this, because it is probable the work may never receive any farther improvement from his hands ; and because, should his name deserve to descend to posterity, on account of more important, though not more pleasing literary labours, it will infallibly be associated with Woodstock, and with BLENHEIM in particular !

RECTORY, WOODSTOCK,

June 1, 1814.

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GENERAL INFORMATION.

BLENHEIM may be seen, every afternoon, from THREE till FIVE o'clock, except on SUNDAYS and PUBLIC DAYS. On FAIR DAYS at WOODSTOCK, likewise, it can be seen only by particular permission.

COMPANY who arrive at WOODSTOCK in the morning, may find ample and pleasant employment of their time, in taking the Ride of the Park, the Walk of the Gardens, or in viewing other objects of attraction, before the hour of admission to the Palace.

The CHINA GALLERY, PARK, and GARDENS, will, on proper application, be shewn at any hour of the day, except during the time of Divine Service, on Sundays.

*** Plans of *Blenheim Park*, on grand Eagle French Paper, plain or coloured, for framing, may be had where the *Description* is sold. Price 1s. plain, and 2s. 6d. coloured.

PRELIMINARY ESSAY

ON

LANDSCAPE GARDENING.

NATURAL Taste is the foundation of all picturesque embellishment. To seize the grand outline with the mind's eye, to adapt the design to the predominant features in the landscape, to unfold the beauties of nature by the masterly touches of art, is the sublime province of the ornamental composer of rural scenery.

That this science has been cultivated with the greatest success in this country, even jealousy and national rivalry will not pretend to deny. Foreign writers, distinguished for their taste, have allowed us a pre-eminence in landscape and ornamental gardening, and that the English were the first who emancipated themselves from the trammels of prejudice and formality, and recurring to nature, which had long been banished from the seats of the great, invited her to her

deserted abodes, and gave her a new and more imposing aspect.

KENT saw the incongruity of artificial design, when at variance with nature. The straight walk, the clipped hedge, the tortured yew, sunk beneath the superior chastity of his taste. He made indeed as much progress as an innovator, who had a prevailing bad taste to contend with, could be expected to do. Perhaps his own was not quite correct. One age seldom unfolds a new and happy idea, and brings that idea to perfection. We have had schools of painting, as well as of ornamental scenery. Some masters were distinguished for one excellence, and some for another. The force of genius has at intervals prevailed over original disadvantages; and produced works to be admired, though not in every respect deserving imitation. REYNOLDS, who will ever remain the glory of British painters, with a mind enlightened by science, and chastised by taste, embodied the form, and caught the character, which he transfused into the colouring on the canvas. He grouped—he combined—he followed nature, and therefore succeeded; but he had great artists among his predecessors, who paved the way for the attainment of superior excellence.

It was not thus with picturesque embellishment. The science was comparatively new;

and where attempts had been formerly made, they were in general conducted on a wrong principle, or proceeded from a vitiated taste.

KENT had every obstacle in his way ; yet he accomplished much ; and gratitude is due to him who deviates from a wrong path, and aspires to perfection, though he may not be able to reach her temple !

To KENT succeeded BROWN—a man originally bred a gardener* ; and from this fortuitous circumstance, without a particle of his genius, every person who can superintend a kitchen-garden, or handle a spade, has thought himself qualified to quit his sphere, and attempt design. But BROWN possessed an originality of conception, a Poet's eye, and an instinctive taste for rural embellishment. He was at last animated and inspired by some of his own creations.

He saw the deformity of perverted beauty with keener optics than KENT—he viewed nature

* When a youth, BROWN had been employed for some years in the gardens of KIDDINGTON HOUSE, in this vicinity. After he acquired celebrity, he was called in to improve that place, which he did with considerable effect. It was observed to him, however, in the prosecution of this work, that he could never command extensive prospects from the House. “ I will make it,” replied he, “ so agreeable that no one will wish to look beyond it.” I write this on the authority of the late Lady Mostyn, who was the heiress of the property, and whose second son, Charles Browne Mostyn, Esq. now inherits it.

with the enthusiasm of a lover; and though it cannot be denied, that he sometimes tricked her out in meretricious ornaments, and patched her with too refined an art, he never lost sight of her prominent charms; and his worst errors can only be considered as minute pimples on a beautiful face*.

We have, however, seen this mighty master of picturesque embellishment severely censured by some of his own countrymen, who, indulging too much in the visions of theory, have denied him the merit of practical excellence. Because BROWN could execute better than he could describe, and worked by self-taught rules, he has been attacked with unbecoming asperity; and some of his most capital performances have been ascribed to chance, or to a dereliction of his own principles.

But who can reduce the infinite variety of situations that ask for improvement to any systematic principles! The powerful genius of a place will imperiously set rules at defiance; and in fact, art can only be the handmaid of nature, whose beauties, presenting a boundless variety, are alike indignant of confinement and control†.

* BROWN, as an ingenious critic observes, made it his maxim to follow and to copy Nature; whom, if he did not always represent in the images he set up to her honour, he at least caused to be admired and adored.

† REPTON's sliding plates, which exhibit a place in its original state, and according to his intended improvements, are

The attempt at system is only an effort to bring us back to what has justly been exploded. "I have no magical skill in planting roses," says Gray; and were this skill attainable, the landscape gardener ought to reject it. Nature disdains the fetters of art. The best principles can never be universally applicable to all situations. The painter may invent or reject at pleasure, and adhere to the rules of his art: the embellisher of landscape is more confined in his operations; he cannot always reject—he can only improve. His invention may cover incidental defects; but it cannot always command the excellencies he might wish. Besides, a flat surface and an extended natural scene, are very different materials to work on, and will have very different effects when viewed by the eye of natural taste*, the only just criterion of rural embellishment.

The chef d'œuvre of BROWN was the improvement of a novel and excellent invention. They shew by contrast what embellishments the situation is susceptible of, and in general indicate a very correct taste in the designer. To him, however, is opposed LOUDON, who, professing to follow nature alone, sometimes descends to the affectation of minuteness, though his general ideas possess much merit.

* By natural taste, is meant that quick perception of the beauties and deformities of nature, which enables a person at once to decide. No faculty is more rare. It requires the union of a poetic imagination with a correct judgment.

ments at *BLENHEIM* *. He had the noblest field to display his talents on, and he did not labour in vain. But though he traced the outline with effect, the correct taste of the noble possessor of this magnificent place enabled him to give it many additional touches, and to improve its drapery. He has, however, preserved the unity of the design, and only heightened the colouring. Who, that now visits these picturesque scenes can deny, but that plantations have been applied to all the principal purposes which M. De Girardin, perhaps copying from his beloved *Ermenonville*, conceives ought to be their grand objects :

“To form the perspective or side scenes of the foreground, that may best connect the distances, with the principal points of view.”

“To raise such elevations or scenes, as may give relief even to an absolute flat.”

“To hide all disagreeable objects.”

“To give more extent to those that are pleas-

* It has been said, and probably on good authority, that when *VANBRUGH*, the architect of *BLENHEIM*, was requested to give a *design* also for the intended *Gardens*, he declined the task, by observing, “for that you must go to a *Landscape Painter*.” This does honour to his taste, and shews how far he outstripped his cotemporaries, who, vitiated by bad models, would in general have been unable to discover, that *Landscape Painting* and *Gardening* are naturally allied in their object, though their materials are very different.

ing, by concealing their terminations behind a mass of wood; by which means the imagination continues them beyond the point where they are seen."

"To give an agreeable outline to all surfaces, whether of land or water."

These are the ideas of a master; and we here see them realized. They who think justly, in matters not under the influence of the passions, will generally come to the same conclusions: hence often coincidence without intention.

But while BROWN has been too indiscriminately condemned by some, he has also been too lavishly praised by others, where he is least defensible. His formal clumps must in many cases be given up by his most zealous partizans, or receive a degree of connection by intermediate planting, as has been done at BLENHEIM, in order to preserve the uniformity of the scene. His unvarying circular belts too, where they are not broken into masses, as we see them here, and when they serve to exclude the prospect of the surrounding country, are real defects in picturesque beauty. No kind of property is less the object of envy, or more grateful to the eye, than to take possession of a country in an extensive view: it contributes to the general beauty, and is equally enjoyed by all, without offence to any. That display of nature is certainly most magnificent, which is bounded only by the horizon: where

scenes, under the immediate view, present the most captivating charms, and where the distance harmonizes with the fore-ground.

Such is the prevailing character of **BLENHEIM**. But let us not degrade it into a mere object to please the eye of taste, however refined. It presents views to interest the heart. To the picturesque landscape which charms the sight, it superadds the moral landscape that delights the mind. In its wide extent, it exhibits accommodations for age, remunerated for services in youth—it is peopled with happy labourers—it is stocked with cattle—it waves with corn*. These not only enliven its most brilliant scenes, but give them a charm to the heart of

* SONNET, on seeing some hundred additional acres in Blenheim Park, converted into tillage.

Oft o'er this scene, with raptured eye, the Muse
Has lov'd to stray, while Fancy's magic glass
In fairy tints has painted ancient views,
And shewn, in long array, Fame's fav'rites pass :
Th' illustrious line of names renown'd of old,
Imagination wakes—and startles to behold !—
Here **RURAL BEAUTY** fix'd her pristine reign,
And lur'd our **MONARCHS** to her native seat ;
Here ev'ry spot—the shade, the slope, the plain,
Is sacred ground, and worn by hallow'd feet.
And shall brown **CERES** o'er the space preside,
Where Kings have ponder'd, and a **CHAUCER** sung ?
Yes, goddess, come ! with thee the gifts abide,
That prop the promp of State,—that tune the poet's tongue.

1795.

sensibility, which no inanimate or unproductive embellishments can possibly convey. The splendid seat may indicate the fortune of the possessor, but it is the state of the cottages in the vicinity that marks the character of the man. Every lodge within the limits of a nobleman's or gentleman's domain, multiplies the means of superintendence at a very small expense, and is equally beneficial to himself and to the community. In fine, we may say with De Lille,

Qui fait aimer les champs, fait aimer la vertu.

easiness; which no inanimate or unproductive
 embellishments can possibly convey. The splen-
 did seat may indicate the fortune of the possessor,
 but it is the state of the cottages in the vicinity
 that marks the character of the man. Every
 lodge within the limits of a nobleman's or gentle-
 man's domain, multiplies the means of super-
 abundance at a very small expense, and is
 equally beneficial to himself and to the com-
 munity. In this we may say with the Latin

Qui latuit non latet, sed non est videtur.

For the new
DESCRIPTION
of
BLLENHEIM.

NEW DESCRIPTION

OF

BLENHEIM.

" Having seen every thing that was curious in Oxford, we proceeded to BLENHEIM, the Seat of the Duke of Marlborough. This place is without comparison superior to any thing I ever beheld. The beauties of Windsor Park faded before it, and every other place I had visited was effaced from my recollection, on viewing its magnificence." *From the Travels of Mirza Abu Taleb Khan, commonly known in this country by the title of the " Persian Prince,"* 1799—1803.

THE Palace or Castle of BLENHEIM, whether regarded in itself, as a magnificent pile of architecture, replete with the choicest works of art, or as taken with its accompaniments, where the sweetest natural charms, have been improved by cultivated taste, has long maintained its reputation of being one of the most splendid objects of attraction in this kingdom, or perhaps in Europe. It stands in the fairest part of one of the finest counties in England, within half a mile of the borough of New Woodstock; distant about eight miles from the University of Oxford, and sixty-three from London. The surrounding country, though presenting none of the bolder features of

nature, is fertile and irriguous, adorned with woods, and abounding with seats of the nobility and gentry*; the air is pure, mild, and salubrious; and all the necessaries, and many of the luxuries of life, are plentiful and choice.

BLENHEIM was built at the public expense in the reign of Queen ANNE, by whom, with the concurrence of Parliament, which voted half a million† for its completion, it was conferred, together with the honour of WOODSTOCK, on the most illustrious JOHN DUKE of MARLBOROUGH, as a testimony of royal favour and national gratitude for his transcendent services, and the many signal victories he had gained over the French and Bavarians, particularly that near the village of BLENHEIM, on the banks of the Danube, from which this noble palace receives its name.

This victory being achieved on the second day

* BLENHEIM PALACE; DITCHLEY, the present residence of the Earl of Ormond, but the property of Lord Viscount Dillon; and HEYTHROP, the seat of the Earl of Shrewsbury; form a chain of PARKS, within a moderate distance, each possessing its peculiar and appropriate beauties; though the first stands unrivalled for grandeur and extent, for natural charms, and for elegant embellishment.

† Though Parliament was apparently so liberal, immense sums have been expended by the family on this noble structure and its accompaniments, to bring it to its present state. The TRIUMPHAL GATE, the PILLAR, and the GRAND BRIDGE, were wholly built at their private expense. The improvements of the park and gardens, and the expansion of the water, within the last fifty years, have cost little less than £200,000.

of August, 1704, it was enacted. "That on the same day of every year for ever, the inheritors of his Grace's honours and titles should render at WINDSOR to her Majesty, her heirs, and successors, one standard or colours, with three fleurs-de-lis painted thereon, as an acquittance for all manner of rents, suits, and services due to the Crown." The terms of this tenure are punctually observed; and in consequence, a long series of flags are exhibited at WINDSOR CASTLE.

The architect of BLENHEIM was Sir JOHN VANBRUGH, who, though he has been censured, with some shew of reason, for the general heaviness of his designs, and his deviation from the purer models of Greece and Rome, must at least stand acquitted in this instance, when it is considered, that strength and durability were principal objects to be regarded, in a pile intended to remain a monument of British valour and British generosity, till the latest periods of time——

Till time's remotest stage design'd to prove
A CHURCHILL'S valour, and a Nation's love*.

Accordingly, we find both the plan and the execution excellently adapted to answer those momentous purposes; and while the more modern and fanciful fabrics are only the boast of an age, Blenheim seems calculated to stand un-

* The verses interspersed, where not otherwise acknowledged, are generally taken from BLENHEIM, a Poem, by the author of this Description, first published in 1787.

injured by the lapse of years, and to excite the admiration of foreigners as well as natives, in proportion as it is better known.

But Vanbrugh does not stand in need of the poor compliment of an apology for his design,—he deserves very considerable applause for his judgment, in a circumstance which has principally exposed him to the censure of pretended critics: he has rendered this structure characteristic and expressive of its destination. Its massy grandeur, its spacious portals, and its lofty towers, recal the ideas of defence and security; with these we naturally associate the hero for whom it was erected, and thus find it emblematic of his talents and pursuits*.

* When this description was first published, the strictures on Vanbrugh's architecture had been so long and so often bandied about, by unreflecting prejudice, that the Author was fearful to bestow even an adequate eulogium on this noble pile. He has not the vanity to think that he has been able to give a turn to the public opinion in this respect; but he certainly has the pleasure to find, that several writers of indisputable taste, since that period, have stepped forward in vindication of his general sentiments, and have even far exceeded his moderate commendation. But the age of BLENHEIM has reached a century; and the reign of error or of prejudice, is seldom of longer duration!

It has been observed, however, that from the great extent of the wings, the centre appears too low, or wanting relief; and no one will attempt to defend the *punning* statues of *lions* tearing *cocks*. These last might be removed without the least injury to the pile, whose real beauties, though not wholly reducible to the strict orders of architecture, must ever irresistibly please the most fastidious taste.

From Woodstock, the usual approach, we enter the park through a grand TRIUMPHAL ARCH, or spacious portal of the Corinthian order, raised to the memory of John Duke of Marlborough, by Sarah his Duchess; and charged with the following inscription, on the side next Woodstock:

PORTA HAEC EXTRVCTA EST ANNO POST OBITVM

ILLVSTRISSIMI

JOHANNIS DVCIS DE MARLBOROUGH JVSSV ATQVE

AVSPICIIS

SARAE CONJVGIS DILECTISSIMAE CVI TESTAMENTO

COMMENDAVIT OPERA

QVIBVS VLTIMAM IPSE MANVM NON IMPOSVERAT.

QVANTA FVERINT DVCIS IN REMPUBLICAM MERITA

INGRESSO TIBI

PLVRIBVS DICET COLUMNA QVAM OPTIMAE

CONJVGIS PIETAS PONI VOLVIT

VT PERENNE ESSET IPSIVS GLORIAE SVAEQVE

DILECTIONIS MONVMENTVM.

A. D. MDCCXXIII.

Towards the park is the subsequent translation:

THIS GATE WAS BVILT THE YEAR AFTER THE DEATH
OF THE MOST ILLVSTRIOVS

JOHN DVKE OF MARLBOROUGH BY ORDER OF SARAH

HIS MOST BELOVED WIFE

TO WHOM HE LEFT THE SOLE DIRECTION OF THE
MANY THINGS

THAT REMAINED VNFINISHED OF THIS FABRIC.

THE SERVICES OF THIS GREAT MAN TO HIS
COVNTY THE PILLAR

WILL TELL YOV WHICH THE DVCHESS HAS ERECTED

FOR A LASTING

MONVMENT OF HIS GLORY AND HER AFFECTION

TO HIM.

MDCCXXIII.

On opening this gate, one of the most enchanting prospects in nature discloses itself to our view. The PALACE appears in front, the towers of which rise into the horizon; on the left, the Rectory and WOODSTOCK Tower; on the right, a broad and deep valley, through which flows a RIVER of equal extent, with bold and winding shores, at a proportionate distance intersected, but visibly not terminated, by a BRIDGE of corresponding magnificence to the grandeur of the scene;—a swelling lawn, crowned with a superb and lofty COLUMN, which leaves the tallest trees, that seem crowding round its base, at an immense distance below; while light clumps, shady groves, and plantations of different shapes and hues, skirt the bounding dales, or clothe the remoter slopes; a second REACH of WATER beyond the bridge, fringed by deep woods that rise to the very summit of the opposite hill, and compose a variously tinted and indented surface of luxuriant foliage—all these form an assemblage of attractions, unrivalled; and conspire to strike the eye of taste with an irresistible charm. In this singularly picturesque landscape, the beautiful and the sublime are most intimately combined; all that can please, elevate, or astonish, display themselves at once; and the mind is at a loss to know to what source it is chiefly indebted for its pleasure, or rather what is the predominant

character of the objects that arrest its attention.

At a small distance from this portal, towards the right, is the *Centrum Phonicum*, or Speaker's Place, of a very remarkable polysyllabical articulate ECHO*; which, according to Dr. Plott, in his Natural History of Oxfordshire, will distinctly repeat seventeen syllables in a calm day, and in the night, twenty: but the demolition of the ancient palace, which stood on the brow of the opposite hill, the extension of the river, or these effects combined, have in a great measure diminished its surprising powers. However, a very superior ECHO may still be heard by a speaker stationed near an old cedar of Lebanon, between ROSAMOND'S Well and the bridge; and it is nothing unusual, for those who are acquainted with this circumstance, to compliment the vocal nymph with a friendly salutation, which is speedily returned with amazing exactness of articulation, and reiterated according to the stillness of the surrounding scene. Musical sounds have a delightful effect on this spot; and I have heard the vocal nymph complimented with a song in her

* ECHOES, the playthings of former philosophists, seem to have been favorite objects with PLOTT. And as this is one of which he appears to have been particularly enamoured, it would have argued fastidiousness or neglect, to be wholly silent in its praise.

own praise, in which she did not, through false delicacy, disdain to join.

A broad gravel-road, preserving one uniform direction for a quarter of a mile, and gradually diverging from the sweep of the river, to which there is a bold descent, conducts us towards the eastern gate of the palace. This road is almost wholly open. On the Woodstock side, only a few small rising clumps appear, which assist to conceal the boundary from other points of view, and to break the line of the buildings; a few trees, fancifully disposed, skirt the slope, and others of a larger growth range with the stream on its very edge, and afford some pretty glades into the water, between their trunks and boughs; but their heads scarcely rising above the level of the walk, they serve rather to vary than to conceal. In front of the HOME LODGE, which stands on the left, appears that elegant structure, the CHINA GALLERY, which will be separately described in the sequel.

As we advance, the prospects diversify; the fine rural scenes in the northern part of the park become more and more conspicuous; and to the north-west, the eye takes in an ample field of cheerful objects, over a wide extent of champaign and woodland country, to the extremity of WHICHWOOD Forest, which is finely contrasted with the deep umbrage that overhangs the lake,

and intercepts the view. This road, which is only lateral and circuitous, to avoid the stiffness of a direct approach, at last falls into another, denominated the MALL; which beginning at the noble entrance on the south of Woodstock, called HENSINGTON GATE, is lined by double rows of stately trees, and forms a beautiful and spacious vista to the Palace.

By the EASTERN GATE of the Palace, over which is a reservoir capable of containing five hundred hogsheads of water*, we enter an arcaded quadrangle; on the right, consisting of offices; on the left chiefly occupied by the

THEATRE,

which is fitted up in a style of peculiar elegance, and with appendages correspondent to the munificence and fortune of the owner. The stage is large, and is furnished with proper changes of scenery, by Rooker. That which represents Marlborough House and St. James's Park, is not less

* This water, which supplies the house, is raised by an engine on Aldersea's construction, erected in old Woodstock mill. The water which serves the greatest part of Woodstock is thrown up by another engine in an appropriate building within the park, in the same vicinity. It would be very easy to render either of these available, both to Blenheim and Woodstock, in case of one of them being out of repair, which is not an unusual circumstance, and therefore should be provided for.

appropriate in its application, than beautiful in its execution. The seats for the audience are easy and commodious, and capable of accommodating two hundred persons, without including the side-boxes. The whole has a grand and a pleasing effect, and is open to the inspection of those who desire it, though it has not been used for dramatic representations, for more than twenty years.

It includes the principal part of the original GREEN HOUSE*, out of which it was formed in

* The Author hopes to be excused for introducing the following poetical trifle of his younger days, into this edition of his work. It recalls scenes that can return no more: it records feelings whose impression is still fresh on the heart.

*To His Grace the DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH, on converting his
GREEN-HOUSE into a PRIVATE THEATRE.*

Why weeps the Genius of those flowers,
And binds with cypress wreaths his brow?
Why turns gay FLORA from those bowers,
Where all her charms were wont to glow?
“Alas!” she cries, “my loveliest plants,
That erst were rear’d with tender care,
Torn rudely from their fav’rite haunts,
Are doom’d to feel the chilling air!
Does beauty claim no partial eye?
Do strangers* meet no mild regard,
To please—they left their native sky;
To die neglected—their reward!”

* Alluding to the exotics.

1787, and was first opened on Friday the 19th of

“ Forbear,” a listening DRUID cries,
 “ Fair Goddess of the painted train !
 For sounds of joy exchange those sighs,
 Nor quit these mansions in disdain.
 Where once your plants of brightest bloom,
 The sweetest fragrance shed around,
 The LOVES and GRACES haste to come,
 And MUSES consecrate the ground.
 The gayest tints your tribes could boast,
 Would soon beneath superior fade ;
 Then weep not for your empire lost,
 Nor, pining, seek the sombre shade.
 Soon shall your raptur’d eyes behold,
 Each charm that wins the polish’d mind ;
 And worth, that void of rank or gold,
 Would gain the homage of mankind.
 CLEORA, fraught with every grace,
 Shall here with kind attention seize ;
 ASPASIA’s smile illumine that face,
 Which plastic nature form’d to please.
 With blushes crown’d and lustrous eye,
 Beyond the painter’s mimic art,
 LUCINDA here shall join to dry
 The tear, that flows from sorrow’s smart.
 The Sister-Graces *, each possess
 Of charms appropriate and belov’d,
 With blended powers shall touch the breast,
 By sense inform’d,—by feeling mov’d.
 Then Goddess ! cease your sad complaint,—
 For partial ills forget to grieve ;
 Or if your sorrows must have vent,
 O, let the DRUID’s song relieve !”

* Ladies Caroline, Elizabeth, and Charlotte Spencer, who performed in the drama, not one of whom lives to read these recording lines.

October in that year, with the comedy of *False Delicacy*, and *Who's the Dupe?*

The *Dramatis Personæ* were Lord Charles Spencer, Lord Henry Spencer, Lord William Russel, the Hon. Mr. Edgcumbe, and John Spencer, Esq. Ladies Caroline, Elizabeth and Charlotte Spencer, and Miss Peshall. The Comedy of the *Liar*, and the *Guardian*, were likewise got up on this occasion; and were performed in a classical style before brilliant audiences, for several successive nights.

The theatricals recommenced on the 10th of January in the following year, with increased spirit and attractions. The leading plays were the *Musical Lady*, and the *Maid of the Oaks*. In the latter, the Honourable Mr. Jenkinson, now Earl of Liverpool, appeared in the character of Old Groveby, with very considerable applause. The performance lasted five nights.

After some intermediate representations, in which *She Stoops to Conquer* and the *Deaf Lover* were exquisitely performed, the regular dramatic exhibitions on the stage at Blenheim closed, it is believed, with General Conway's comedy of *False Appearances*, and Mrs. Cowley's Attic entertainment of *Who's the Dupe?* which were given with undiminished interest and effect, on the 21st and 22d of August, 1789.

From this quadrangle we proceed to the area, where the NORTH FRONT, with its semicircular

sweep, opens to the view; a noble piece of architecture, in a mixed original style, three hundred and forty-eight feet from wing to wing, and highly ornamented, particularly in the centre, which stands on Corinthian pillars of vast magnitude.

This is the grand approach; and to it we are properly conducted over the valley, through which the river winds, by a magnificent bridge*, which has been frequently compared to the RIALTO at Venice, though without any parallel of application. The diameter of its centre arch is an hundred and one feet:

Thro' which the Danube might collected pour
His spacious urn,

The effect of this bridge, which unites two hills, and gives an uniformity and consistency to

* In this bridge are various apartments, some with fire-places, which have never been fitted up, though for summer retreats, they would be extremely pleasant. On the side next Blenheim, they are inaccessible, since the expansion of the lake.—In some of these dark and unexplored recesses it is not improbable that one or more species of the swallow tribe find a winter retreat, and lie in a torpid state till the return of spring. This is certain, that they have been noticed skimming the lake, as early as any have been discovered on the sea-coasts. One season, a *white* swallow was seen for a considerable time. This *lusus naturæ* has been occasionally observed in other places.

the scene, that would otherwise be disjointed and complex, is peculiarly grand; and its application, one of the happiest efforts of judgment. Beyond it, on a considerable eminence, in the midst of a fine lawn, is a stately column or pillar, one hundred and thirty feet high, on the top of which stands a colossal statue of the immortal John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough,

— like a guardian God sublime,

And awes the subject plain.

Every circumstance that enters into the composition of the scene, unites to promote one vast and beautiful effect. The north front itself is of such magnificence as to diffuse a lustre on surrounding objects; the accompaniments are well adapted to reflect it back on the building; a fine expanse of water stretches its arms around, as if proud to embrace it, approaches in a variety of directions, spreads its animating spirit over the whole, and connects together the widely extended, and extremely diversified parts of the brilliant landscape.

The SOUTH FRONT, though less extensive than the north, is highly elegant, and constructed in the purest style of architecture. It commands a calm scene, a view that, without surprising, no repetition can render indifferent: the eye rests on it with complacency, and returns to it with de-



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West View of Blenheim, in Oxfordshire, the Seat of the Duke of Marlborough.

North sculp.

light. The foreground is a fine lawn, frequently covered with sheep, and enlivened with flocks of pheasants, so tame as to follow their feeder; the pleasure grounds succeed; behind is a beautiful perspective of the romantic village of BLADON, with its neat, unobtrusive church tower, just peeping through tufted trees; and still farther, a prospect of the distant hills, which breaking one before another, exhibits a succession of chains, till the last, a continuation of the CHILTERN Range, or the WHITE HORSE hills in Berkshire, gradually dissolves in the almost boundless horizon, on the south-west. Over the portico, which does credit to the Corinthian order, stands a colossal bust of LOUIS XIV. of France, taken from the gates of Tournay.

A glorious trophy to the Victor's fame,—

A lasting record of the GALLIC shame.

It is adorned with proper military emblems, and under it is the subsequent inscription, running along the pediment:

EUROPE HÆC VINDEX GENIO DECORA ALTA BRITANNO*.

Which may be rendered, "*The avenger of Europe dedicates these lofty honours to the genius of Britain.*"

* Though this inscription has but one obvious, and can have but one consistent meaning, it has nevertheless been tor-

Near the eastern angle, a commodious and elegant OBSERVATORY has been erected by the present Duke, amply furnished with the best astronomical apparatus, by the justly celebrated Ramsden. A grand telescope by Herschell, presented to the Duke by his Majesty, soon after the royal visit to Blenheim in 1786, and now in the library, may be reckoned a very valuable appendage.

From the accurate observations made by Major Mudge in his measurement of an arc of the meridian, which was carried on, during the years 1800, 1, and 2, it appears that Blenheim is situated in $51^{\circ} 50' 27''.9$ north latitude, $1^{\circ} 15''$ west longitude,

The apartments of this Palace are furnished with princely magnificence: the tapestry and paintings attract universal and deserved attention; but as it is impossible to do them adequate

tured into various; and the sentence without a *verb*, has been the alternate stumbling block of real ignorance and false criticism; no authorities can avail the former; the latter may be convinced of its propriety, by referring to

Æneas hæc de Danaïs Victoribus arma.

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΙ ΑΠΟ ΜΗΔΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΘΗΒΑΙΩΝ.

and to other instances of a similar mode of expression, from sources of unquestionable purity.

justice in any general description, we shall conduct our readers through the grand suite of rooms usually open to public inspection, in the order in which they are shewn, and enumerate the most celebrated productions of art in each.

Here PAINTING shews the wonders of her art,
Gains on the sense, and captivates the heart;
From mimic pencils new creations rise,
Start into life, and wear its native dyes;
Bold as the form PROMETHEUS taught to move,
When Heaven's dread lightning he withdrew from JOVE.

Here BRUSSEL's looms their boasted skill display,
And tapestry armies stand in long array.
The vivid tints with war's dread horrors burn:
Here, Grief and Shame—there, Rage and Fury turn;
The lengthen'd march—the ramparts rise to sight,
And all the kindling glories of the fight.

Hail, ye great artists, whose enchanting skill
Can mould the passions, and control the will:
Not to the eye your labours are address'd,—
They boast an influence o'er the ductile breast;
For while, entranc'd, each happy touch we view,
The MORAL SENSE becomes reform'd by you:
Beauty and order, harmony and ease,
Unite to polish, as they tend to please!

I. HALL.

Through a superb portico, on massy Corinthian columns of elegance and dimensions almost unrivalled, we enter the HALL, a noble and finely proportioned apartment, which lies in the centre

of the north, or grand front: this is also supported by fluted Corinthian pillars. The ceiling, which is the height of the building, or sixty-seven feet, is painted by Sir JAMES THORNHILL, and allegorically represents VICTORY, with proper accompaniments, crowning JOHN Duke of MARLBOROUGH, as she points to a plan of the battle of BLENHEIM. The Duke is depicted in a blue Roman dress. Over the noble marble door-case that communicates with the Saloon, is a bust of the same hero, with this inscription.

ECCE VIRUM STABILES CUI GENS AUGUSTA PENATES
CUI FRACTAS TANDEM GALLIA DEBET OPES.
HIC VETEREM ANGLIÆ VIRTUTI INSTAURAT HONOREM
SEU RES CONSILIO, SEU SIT AGENDA MANU.
NON ANIMO AUGUSTUS MELIOR NON JULIUS ARMIS
SEU MULCET GENTES, ILLE VEL ILLE DOMAT.

BEHOLD THE MAN TO DISTANT NATIONS KNOWN,
WHO SHOOK THE GALLIC, FIX'D THE AUSTRIAN THRONE.
NEW LUSTRE TO BRITANNIA'S GLORY GAVE;
IN COUNCILS PRUDENT, AS IN ACTION BRAVE.
NOT JULIUS MORE IN ARMS DISTINGUISH'D SHIN'D,
NOR COULD AUGUSTUS BETTER CALM MANKIND.

In the gallery above, on the same side, may be seen whole length portraits of CLARA EUGENIA, Infanta of Spain, and governess of the *Netherlands*;—of Queen ANNE, by Lily, and of a LADY in a blue dress, by an unknown master. A large collection of family portraits, not usually shewn, occupy the same gallery, which runs the whole extent of the house. Below, in niches near the

angles, are the MEDICEAN VENUS, and the DANCING FAWN, in bronze, from the originals in the Grand Duke of Tuscany's collection, and executed with inimitable skill, by Maximilian Soldani Benzi, at Florence, in 1711.

The arcades on the right and left are adorned with marble TERMINI. Below, on a black marble slab, stands a fine antique DIANA and DOG, universally admired; and exactly opposite, on a similar slab, is a beautiful VASE with figures in relieve, from the antique, supposed to represent the nuptial ceremonies of the Romans.

Over the grand staircase is a large picture, by Hudson, of CHARLES Duke of MARLBOROUGH and Family; and beyond the arcades, on the other side of the hall, the FIRST DUKE and FAMILY are delineated by the pencil of Closterman.

The wind-dial on the right side of the Hall, connected with a magnificent gilt vane in the external centre, which gives apparent elevation to this part of the building, is a new and attractive appendage.

II. BILLIARD ROOM.

From the Hall, we open a long gallery, on the right of which, near the entrance, is the BILLIARD ROOM, which is now added to the suite of apartments displayed to the public.

It is fitted up in a manner suitable to its desti-

nation, with a Billiard Table of the largest dimensions, in the middle.

On three sides are latticed bookcases, filled with miscellaneous literature in various languages, but chiefly French. The fourth side is occupied by the windows, opening into a court. Above the bookcases are the following pictures.

Over the first door :—

I.* A View in Venice.—CANALETTI.

Gipsies with a Soldier.—VALENTINO.

II. Landscape.—CLAUDE LORRAINE.

Over the chimney-piece of massy white marble :—

A capital whole length picture of Louis XIV, in an easy sitting posture, and grasping his sceptre.—MIGNARD.

The Marriage in Cana of Galilee.—PAUL VERONESE.

III. View of Antwerp.—MINDERHOUT.

Over the second door :—

View in Venice.—CANALETTI.

IV. Between the two windows nearest the entrance,

A fine head of St. Cecilia.—PAUL VERONESE.

* The Roman numerals I. II. III. refer to the THREE SIDES of the apartment, beginning on the right at entering : the FOURTH, and in the grand cabinet the THIRD likewise, is occupied by the windows and the mirrors. The Arabic characters, 1, 2, express the upper and lower rows of pictures on the same side. When the arrangement would not suffer this easy mode of distinction and recollection, the figures are omitted.

III. BOW-WINDOW ROOM.

Re-entering the gallery we proceed to the BOW-WINDOW ROOM. The famous battle of **BLLENHEIM** is pourtrayed in the tapestry on the right at entrance, and occupies a considerable space. The principle action is confined to the taking of Marshal **TALLARD**. The battle of **WYNENDAEL** is represented in the tapestry on the left.

Over the first door:—

St. Jerome studying, very fine.—**GIORGIONI**.

Over the chimney:—

A most capital original picture of the Virgin and Child, St. John and St. Nicholas, formerly belonging to the Capella degli Ansidei, at Perugia.—**RAPHAEL**.

On a pannel to the right.

A fine Head after **HAN. CARACCI**.—**SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS**.

A Head of Lady Anne Churchill.—**SIR GODFREY KNELLER**.

A small picture of the Assumption.—**TINTORET**.

A Female Head.—**REUBENS**.

Two Monkeys in the habits of Monks.—**TENIERS**.

A Madona and Child.—**LEONARDO DA VINCI**.

Over the second door:—

Two Nymphs.—**UNCERTAIN MASTER**.

Between two beautiful fluted Corinthian pillars :—

Another Portrait of Lady Anne Churchill.—

KNELLER.

A small pendent cabinet, with a miniature Painting, by LADY CLIFDEN.

On the next pannel.

A Man's Head, in the finest style.—TITIAN.

A beautiful etching of a Wood Nymph, by the PRINCESS ROYAL; given to Her Grace the Duchess of Marlborough, by Her Royal Highness, now Queen of WIRTEMBURG.

An allegorical original drawing, by CIPRIANI, intended as a frontispiece to the second volume of the GEMMÆ MARLBURIENSES.

Between the opposite pillars.

A portrait of PRINCE EUGENE.

An elegant engraving of the Marquis of Tavistock, father to the present Duke of Bedford.—WATSON.

On the next pannel.

A Man's Head, unknown.—HOLBEIN.

An etching by the PRINCESS ROYAL.

An original Drawing, by CIPRIANI,—the frontispiece to the first volume of the GEMMÆ MARLBURIENSES,—the subject from Pliny's Nat. Hist.

Over the third door :—

A Battle Piece.—WOVERMANS.

The ceiling is painted in a novel style of simple elegance, and adorned with military emblems, by HAKEWILL. The window curtains and furniture are blue silk damask. Under the mirrors that adorn the pannels between the windows, are two marble slabs, on each of which is a SLEEPING FIGURE, very expressively sculptured in white marble. At the other end of the room are two elegant CABINETS.

IV. DUKE'S DRESSING ROOM.

The decorations of this apartment are rather elegant than splendid; the hangings are straw-coloured flock paper, with a rich border; the furniture is chintz.

The paintings are :—

I. 1. Venus and Adonis.—UNCERTAIN ARTIST.

A Magdalen.—YOUNG PALMA.

Our Saviour in the Virgin's lap, crowning two female Martyrs.—TITIAN.

St. Mark penning his Gospel.—OLD PALMA.

2. Inside view of a Church.—STEENWYCK.

A Prospect of a Spanish Sea Port.—WEENIX.

The Destruction of Pharaoh and his Host in the Red Sea.—OLD FRANK.

II. 1. Two Beggar Boys, very characteristic.—MURILLIO.

Esther and Ahasuerus.—PAUL VERONESE.

Three Beggar Boys.—MURILLIO.

III. 1. A Holy Family, very fine.—REUBENS.

Charles Earl of Sunderland.—KNELLER.

King George I.—UNKNOWN ARTIST.

A sleeping Venus and Satyr, with attending Cupids, from the SCHOOL of REUBENS.

2. A view of Althorpe, the seat of Earl Spencer.—TILLEMANN.*

Over the chimney are two ANTIQUE METAL JARS. Under the mirror, a pair of elegant globes, by ADAMS. On the opposite side of the room, a bookcase, containing some valuable publications, chiefly modern, among which are the GEMMÆ MARLBURIENSES QUÆDAM, a work of inestimable value.

V. EAST DRAWING ROOM.

The hangings and furniture, crimson damask; the ceiling a slight plain dome, of an oval shape; the chimney-piece is composed of the richest veined marble. Many of the paintings are very capital.

I. 1. A Holy Family.—Supposed by RAPHAEL.

The Marchioness de Havre.—VANDYKE.

The Duchess of Buckingham and Offspring.—

THE SAME.

* Some alterations or transpositions have lately been made in this apartment, by the introduction of two or three pieces by that ingenious artist, Mr. Bennet, animal painter, Woodstock.

Mary of Medicis.—VANDYKE.

2. An oval portrait of King William III.—

SIR GODFREY KNELLER.

Death of the Virgin Mary.—GUIDO.

A Holy Family.—VANDYKE.

The Annunciation.—CORREGIO.

An oval portrait of Lady Chesterfield.—VAN-

DYKE.

II. 1. Philip II. King of Spain, a whole length.—

TITIAN.

A most capital and strikingly characteristic

BACCHANALIAN PIECE.—REUBENS.

Andromeda chained to the Rock.—THE SAME.

2. The Offering of the Magi.—REUBENS.

A French Camp.—WATTEAU.

A small pendent Cabinet, with miniatures of
the present Family.—VARIOUS.

Two small Landscapes.—FRENCH ARTIST.

Cattle, in various attitudes.—ROSA DI TIVOLI.

Two corresponding small Landscapes.—THE
SAME.

Another corresponding Cabinet, inclosing mi-
niatures.

A Landscape.—PAUL BRYLLE.

III. 1. A charmingly expressive picture, repre-
senting Lady Charlotte Spencer, in the cha-
racter of a Gipsy, telling her brother,
Lord Henry, his fortune.—SIR JOSHUA
REYNOLDS.

Reubens, Wife, and Child, a present to the first Duke, by the city of Brussels.—

REUBENS.

Charles I.—VANDYKE.

A Holy Family, supposed by RAPHAEL, in his earliest style of painting, a present from the town of Ghent.

2. Henrietta Maria, Queen of Charles I.—
VANDYKE.

An Angel, small size.—CORREGIO.

Cattle and Figures.—WOVERMANS.

A Landscape, small.—CLAUDE LORRAINE.

A broad Day-break, very fine.—VANDERMEER.

VI. GRAND CABINET.

This magnificent apartment opens to the east and south, and commands the most charming natural scenery. The hangings and furniture are rich crimson damask, with gilding of corresponding splendor: the cornice, in particular, is extremely elegant; and in the centre of the ceiling is a large circular gilt plume. The chimney-piece is composed of dark-coloured marble, inlaid with white, in ornamental festoons, with an urn, projecting in relievo, which has a delightful effect: over it stand the listening Slave, and a crouching Venus in bronze, and between them two very curious jars.

The paintings are some of the most superb in

any collection, particularly those of Reubens, of whose works there is an unrivalled assemblage in Blenheim.

I. 1. A Holy Family.—REUBENS.

A Madona standing on a globe, surrounded by Angels.—CARLO MARATTI.

The Offering of the Magi.—REUBENS.

2. A most capital and sweetly-composed picture of our Saviour blessing the Children.—REUBENS.

II. 1. Filial Affection exemplified in the Roman Daughter.—REUBENS.

The Return of our Saviour from Egypt.—
THE SAME.

Lot's Departure out of Sodom, a present from the town of Antwerp.—THE SAME.

2. Portrait of Paracelsus.—THE SAME.

A Madona, her head encircled with stars, supposed the Miraculous Conception, in the finest style—the extended hand is inimitable—the tints are those of life itself.—
CARLO DOLCE.

Raphael's favourite Dorothea.—BY HIMSELF.

Head of Reubens.—THE SAME.

Pope Gregory, and a Female Penitent bearing a palm branch.—TITIAN.

A Holy Family.—LUDOVICO CARACCI.

VII. BLUE DRAWING ROOM.

The hangings are blue damask, with ornamental gilt bordures: the furniture corresponding. The head in the centre of the chimney is a delicate piece of sculpture; the whole is exquisitely finished in white marble. The large gilt branches on each side, above, are peculiarly elegant.

The paintings are:—

I. 1. Isaac blessing Jacob.—REMBRANDT.

—An oval in *claro obscuro*, very expressive, from an ancient gem.—REBECCA.

II. 1. Catharine of Medicis, in colours, almost inimitable.—REUBENS.

Time clipping Cupid's wings, an allegorical painting.—VANDYKE.

William Marquis of Blandford.—SIR GODFREY KNELLER.

2. A Landscape.—VANDERMEER.

A Dutch Family.—OSTADE.

A Landscape.—GASPARD POUSSIN.

Dorothy Countess of Sunderland, immortalized by Waller, under the name of SACHARISSA.—VANDYKE.

Another Landscape.—GASPARD POUSSIN.

A small highly-finished Family Piece.—GONZALES.

A beautiful little Landscape.—WOVERMANS.

III. 1. Ladies Caroline and Elizabeth Spencer; the latter is represented as playing on her harp, the former in the act of taking a sketch of her sister.—ROMNEY.

On the right of which are two Heads of young Women.—PAUL VERONESE.

On the left, our Saviour and St. John.—CARLO DOLCE.

The Woman taken in Adultery.—REMBRANDT.

2. Our Saviour and the Virgin in the clouds, with a Monk paying adoration.—HANNIBAL CARACCI.

Our Saviour and Virgin in the clouds, with accompaniments.—TINTORET.

A brilliant collection, inclosed in one general frame, covered with glass, of twenty-three miniatures of different magnitudes, by various masters, among which are three of the beautiful and unfortunate MARY QUEEN of SCOTS.

A Holy Family.—LUDOVICO CARACCI.

Cattle and Figures.—BAMBOCCHIO.

VIII. WINTER DRAWING ROOM.

The tapestry hangings of this apartment represent the four CARDINAL VIRTUES, with their characteristic emblems and accompaniments; and in vivid beauty of colouring, they approach

nearer to painting than any thing of the same kind in Blenheim.

I. FORTITUDE, with proper insignia. The man wrenching open the lion's jaws is extremely expressive.

II. On one side of the chimney, PRUDENCE, holding a mirror in her left hand, in the action of viewing the conduct of others, that she may be the better able to regulate her own : in the right, a dart entwined with a remora, the respective emblems of speed and delay, between which Prudence observes a middle course.

On the other side of the chimney, JUSTICE, with her balance and sword, and other distinguishing characteristics.

III. TEMPERANCE, with her curb. The River God pouring water out of his urn, is finely imagined, and attracts the notice of every spectator.

The only paintings are :—

A most animated one of Lord Stafford and his Secretary, (of which there are two others in this kingdom, all reputed originals) over the first door.—VANDYKE.

A very beautiful portrait of Mary Duchess of Richmond, with a little girl presenting her gloves, over the chimney.—THE SAME.

Portraits in one piece of Mrs. Morton and Mrs. Killigrew, two of Charles II.'s favourites, over the other door.—SIR PETER LELY.

In the centre of the very elegant chimney-piece, formed of the richest marbles, is an alto relievo of CUPID and PSYCHE'S MARRIAGE, from the antique. A notification is engraved in Greek characters, signifying that TRYPHON executed the original. Over this are two CENTAURS in bronze, and two beautiful URNS of Derbyshire spar.

In this room also are small bronzes of CUPIDS, and of HERCULES killing the CENTAURS. The mirrors are singularly superb.

IX. DINING ROOM.

This apartment is well adapted for its destination, being large, lofty, and commodiously situated, near the centre of the palace. The ceiling is richly stuccoed, and the sides are wainscotted in large pannels, painted white. The chimney-piece is peculiarly handsome: it supports an elegant clock, mounted on an elephant, in bronze, and crowned with an AMERICAN INDIAN.

The productions of the pencil are:—

I. 1. Cattle and Figures, in a very capital style.—CASTIGLIONE.

A Bacchanalian Piece.—VANDYKE.

II. 1. Lot and his Daughters, very fine, a present from the Emperor of Germany.—REUBENS.

Lady Amelia Boyce.—PHILLIPS.

Henrietta Maria, Queen of Charles I.—VANDYKE.

Lord Francis Almaric Spencer.—OWEN.

Venus and Adonis, another present from the Emperor.—REUBENS.

III. The present DUKE, DUCHESS, and six CHILDREN—Ladies Caroline, Elizabeth, Charlotte, and Anne;—the Marquis of Blandford, and Lord Henry: the two youngest, LORD FRANCIS and LADY AMELIA, were born since this very capital picture (which cost seven hundred guineas) was painted.—SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. This eminent artist is supposed to have vied with VANDYKE in his celebrated family piece at Wilton House, and to have excelled him, as far as grouping and character are concerned in the design.

The Rape of Europa.—PAUL VERONESE.

On the pannels near the windows, at each end:—

Three small Landscapes.—WOOTTON.

X. SALOON.

This noble and spacious apartment, which communicates with the HALL, and together with it occupies the entire breadth of the Centre, is

highly finished and richly decorated.—It is lined in the lower part with marble, in the Italian taste, and its four door-cases are entirely composed of the same beautiful and durable material. Over each door, which face the four quarters, are the arms of the first duke. Above the marble basement are six compartments, in which different nations of the world are depicted in their characteristic dresses and contours, by LA GUERRE. These, however, are rather individual caricatures than natural delineations: they are shewn in the following manner, and said to represent,

- I. The Painter,—French,—English*,—and Scotch.
- II. Spaniards.
- III. Moors and Negroes.
- IV. Chinese and Tartars.
- V. Turks.
- VI. Dutch and Swedes.

The ceiling is the height of the building, and is executed by the same artist with peculiar felicity, both in design and performance. It emblematically represents JOHN DUKE of MARLBOROUGH in the career of VICTORY, arrested by

* The Portrait of the Englishman, which possesses much rubicundity and portliness, is believed to represent Dean Jones, Chaplain to Sarah Duchess of Marlborough.

the hand of PEACE, while TIME reminds him of the rapidity of his own flight.

Over the first chimney stands an antique bust of a Roman Consul;—and at the same end of the room, a marble slab, on which lies a finely sculptured Sleeping Venus.

Over the second chimney is an antique bust of CARACALLA;—and on another marble slab, CLEOPATRA and the ASP.

XI. GREEN DRAWING ROOM.

It is hung with tapestry, representing, in vivid colours, some of the military exploits of John Duke of Marlborough.

I. Battle of Dunnewert.

II. The Battle of Lisle, on the right of the chimney;—Siege of Lisle, on the left. The French Spy is very expressively delineated.

III. Battle of Malplaquet. The eager attention of the person receiving orders is admirably drawn.

Over the first door:—

A charming portrait of a young Knight of St. John of Jerusalem.—BARROCCIO.

Over the opposite door:—

A very masterly painting of Meleager and Atalanta.—REUBENS.

On a pannel near the first window on entering :—

The Adoration of the Shepherds.—LUCCA
GIORDANO.

A Madona and Child.—NICHOLAS POUSSIN.

Figures encircled with a wreath of flowers.—
ROTTENHAMMER.

On the opposite pannel.

The offering of the Magi.—LUCCA GIORDANO.

A Holy Family.—NICHOLAS POUSSIN.

Figures encircled with a wreath of flowers.—
ROTTENHAMMER.

A beautiful and curious clock on a new construction, by VULLIAMY, stands on the chimney-piece. A Serpent bending down its head from the top of a small urn, round which the hours are arranged, points out the time with its sting; and on the same urn, an elegant figure of CONTEMPLATION leaning, gives the whole a singular, and rather monumental air. On each side are Boys' Gambols, in bronze.

Above, is a highly finished and very attractive picture of

Her Grace the late DUCHESS of MARLBOROUGH,
in an elegant white dress.—ROMNEY.

On the marble slabs under the windows, are bronzes of Fame and Mercury, mounted on Pegasi.

The curtains, sofas, and other furniture, are deep green damask, of great richness and beauty.

XII. STATE DRAWING ROOM.

This apartment has been recently decorated, and furnished with the utmost magnificence.—The ceiling is elegant;—the cornice is richly gilt;—and the bordure round the room is in a corresponding style. The mirrors are almost unrivalled in the superlative elegance of their frames; the magnitude of their plates is likewise very considerable.

The chimney is composed of the purest white marble: it is adorned with a small central urn, supported by two griffins; these, likewise, are part of the embellishments of the mirrors: they belong to the family arms. The marble slabs are proportionate to the splendor of the rest. A highly finished cabinet at the lower end supports a rich lustre. The curtains and furniture are white damask.

One of the principal ornaments, however, of the room, is a superb picture of his Grace the DUKE of MARLBOROUGH, in his garter robes, by ROMNEY: it is placed over the chimney. From this beautiful painting, Jones executed a very happy mezzotinto: another of the Duchess from ROMNEY's Painting, in the last described apart-

ment, was likewise finished by the same artist.— His pupil, C. Turner, is about to publish a print from the Family Picture, by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

The tapestry is a continuation of the first Duke's achievements.

I. and II. The March to Bouchain.

II. and III. The Siege of Bouchain. In this piece, Lord Cadogan's Dog, which attended his master through the campaigns, and returned safe, makes a conspicuous figure.

Over the first door:—

A Fruit Piece.—LUCCA GIORDANO.

Over the opposite door:—

St. Laurence distributing the ornaments of the altar.—IL PRETE GENOESE.

XIII. STATE BED CHAMBER.

In a palace, there must be apartments for pomp as well as for utility; this is one of the former, and very splendid of the kind. The furniture and hangings are rich blue damask, interlaced with gold. The bed-posts are elegantly fluted, and covered with burnished gold: their extremities adorned with military emblems. The top rises into a dome, surmounted with a ducal coronet; at the head are the family arms.

The chimney-piece is decorated with bronzes

of Hercules killing the Centaurs and the Hydra;—
between these is a bust of Diana—over it is

A capital picture, representing Seneca bleeding to death, while with philosophic composure he dictates to his amanuensis.—

LUCCA GIORDANO.

On a pannel to the right is a fine portrait of
Edward VI.—HOLBEIN.

A view of Architecture.—PANINI.

The burning of Troy.—OLD FRANK.

Over each door:—

A piece of still life.—MALTESE.

From this stately suite of rooms, where the profusion of splendid objects is apt to dazzle the organs of sight, the eye is both charmed and relieved on entering,

XIV. THE LIBRARY.

This very spacious apartment, which occupies the entire West Front, is upwards of one hundred and eighty-three feet long, and is thirty-one feet nine inches wide in the centre.

It is impossible to conceive any thing more superb than the solid columns of veined marble, which support a rich entablature, the Doric pilasters of the same, the surrounding basement of black marble, and the stuccoed compartments of the lofty vaulted ceiling, which open a fine

field for the pencil of the first master in the pictorial art.

This noble room was originally intended as a gallery for paintings ; but has since been furnished with the grand SUNDERLAND collection of books, comprising upwards of seventeen thousand volumes, in various languages, arts, and sciences ; all arranged in elegant cases, with gilt wire latticed doors, on the east side through its whole extent, and along the two ends.

Few private collections are equal to this in value, the whole being reckoned worth 30,000 pounds ; yet this is not the only Library in the palace, nor does it contain more than its proportion of rare and curious books, though it is the only one open to public inspection. The SPENCER family indeed, in all its branches, is distinguished for its literary taste, and the magnificence and extent of its literary treasures. The MARQUIS of BLANDFORD, in particular, is pursuing the same honourable career, though not with indiscriminating ambition. His highly valuable and curious collection at WHITE KNIGHTS consists chiefly of books or classes of books, which are wanting in the Blenheim Libraries ; and will form, when united, an unrivalled assemblage of whatever is scarce or estimable in literature.

At the upper end of the library stands a highly finished white marble statue of QUEEN ANNE, in

her coronation robes, by Rysbrack; on the pedestal is this inscription:

TO THE MEMORY OF QUEEN ANNE!

UNDER WHOSE AUSPICES

JOHN DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH

CONQUERED,

AND TO WHOSE MUNIFICENCE

HE AND HIS POSTERITY

WITH GRATITUDE

OWE THE POSSESSION OF BLENHEIM

A. D. MDCCXXVI.

In a recess on the west side, is an antique statue, inscribed JULIA DOMNA;—and lower down, another of DIANA and DOG, both on mahogany therms.

At the lower end, is a bust of ALEXANDER the GREAT; a fine specimen of Grecian sculpture, in good preservation, dug out of the ruins of Herculaneum; and supported by an elegant modern therm, designed by SIR WILLIAM CHAMBERS.

Over the book-cases on the east side, are the subsequent paintings and sculptures.

Lord Godolphin.

Duke of Montague.

Above the first chimney, a bust of Charles Earl of Sunderland, the collector of the books:—below this

A sea piece of Jonah and the Whale, after
POUSSIN.

And on the chimney, a bust of the Emperor Adrian.

Countess of Sunderland.

Countess of Bridgewater.

Countess Cowper.

Hon. John Spencer.

Over the grand marble door-case communicating with the hall, a bust of Milo Crotonensis.

Elizabeth Duchess of Marlborough.

Charles Duke of Marlborough.

Sarah Duchess of Marlborough.

John Duke of Marlborough.

Over the second chimney:—a Girl's Head, antique.

A Landscape, after Poussin.

Above, a bust of Charles Duke of Marlborough, by RYSBRACK.

Queen Anne.

King William.

From the noble bow-windows on the west, is an elysian prospect of the beautifully waving descent to the lake, and of the pendent groves on the opposite hill. Indeed every apartment has its appropriate beauties, both internal and external: the eye of taste will recognize many which the

brevity of our plan prevented us from noting; to the more cursory observer this description will prove an useful monitor. One striking ornament, however, we have neglected to remark: the MAHOGANY DOORS throughout this whole suite are splendidly finished, and are worthy of the apartments to which they conduct. When open, they form a magnificent vista from the Library to the Grand Cabinet.

XV. CHAPEL.

From the library we proceed along a piazza, with arcades below, to the Chapel, situated in the western wing of the palace. The coup d'œil on entering is extremely grand, and the impression such as corresponds with the place. The style of painting, and the degree of light, are both peculiarly happy: the large compartments of sober gray are finely relieved by the surrounding white; and the shade of foliage that partially darkens the windows, diffuses an air of composed solemnity, unmixed with gloom, unaccompanied with melancholy.

The chief ornament, however, is a stately MONUMENT in various marble, to the memory of the first Duke and Duchess, by Rysbrack. They are represented with their two Sons, who died

young*, as supported by FAME and HISTORY: these are colossal figures, and being most prominent, are the most striking in the group. The pen of HISTORY seems to have traced this inscription on a tablet, which she holds in the other hand:

TO THE MEMORY
OF JOHN DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH AND
HIS TWO SONS
HIS DUCHESS HAS ERECTED
THIS MONUMENT
IN THE YEAR OF CHRIST MDCCXXXIII.

Beneath is the taking of Marshal Tallard, in basso relievo.

The altar piece:—

Our Saviour taken down from the Cross.—

JORDAENS of ANTWERP.

The gallery for the family is splendidly hung with crimson velvet, fringed with gold. The cushions are corresponding. Over the chimney:—

A curious painting on black marble.—ALLES-
SANDRO VERONESE.

* The eldest son of the great Duke of Marlborough, John Marquis of Blandford, died of the small pox, at Cambridge, in the 17th year of his age; and lies buried in one of the aisles of King's College Chapel, where a magnificent altar tomb is erected to his memory. The first duke and duchess, the Marquis of Blandford of the Godolphin family—the first duke and duchess of the Spencer family, the late Duchess of Marlborough and her eldest daughter Viscountess Clifden, are all deposited in the family vault under this chapel, to which there is an approach through the stable court.

TITIAN ROOM.

THIS apartment adjoins the THEATRE, near the entrance of the Gardens, and is ornamented with a superb collection of paintings by TITIAN; a magnificent present from Victor Amadeus, King of Sardinia, to John Duke of Marlborough.

These capital performances of this celebrated master, after long lying hid from public view, are now liberally displayed, chiefly, for the sake of amateurs in the pictorial art. They consist of the following series and are painted on leather.

- I. MARS and VENUS.
- II. CUPID and PSYCHE.
- III. APOLLO and DAPHNE.
- IV. PLUTO and PROSERPINE.
- V. HERCULES and DEJANIRA.
- VI. VULCAN and CERES.
- VII. BACCHUS and ARIADNE.
- VIII. JUPITER, JUNO, and Io.
- IX. NEPTUNE and AMPHITRITE.

These figures, which far exceed the size of nature, though they are little encumbered with drapery, cover three sides of the room, and form almost a school of themselves. It has been remarked, however, that Titian is not happy in expressing female beauty, though he had goddesses to delineate. Indeed, his taste in design is by no means equal to the spirit of his execution and the

beauty of his colouring, in which he is almost unrivalled.

CHINA GALLERY*.

THIS elegant fabric, erected purposely for the reception of the superb collection of porcelain now deposited here, stands close to the HOME LODGE, and is separated from the Park by iron palisadoes.

It was fitted up in the year 1796; and presents an additional attraction to the visitors of Blenheim, who delight in the antique, rich, and curious specimens of the porcelain, delf, and japan manufacture.

But it is not the connoisseur only who will be gratified by this display;—no eye of taste can fail to receive satisfaction from the sight of this splendid collection; nor will the arrangement pass unregarded by the most superficial observer.

The gallery, whose external figure represents a cross, is divided into five compartments.

The two rooms at each end are fitted up in an octagonal form, and lighted from the top, with

* This choice collection was formed by Mr. Spalding, a valetudinary of moderate fortune, during his travels for several years on the Continent, as well as his attendance on sales in this country, and presented by him, on certain conditions, as an appendant to Blenheim.

the porcelain regularly arranged on slight pilasters, or fancifully suspended by brass hooks, against the walls. The centre room, which occupies the transverse of the cross, is circular, and has a light in the form of a dome in the middle, and a smaller one on each side. This apartment is particularly magnificent. Round the walls are ten pannels and twelve pilasters, filled with choice specimens; and at a proper distance in the area, are eight pilasters and six open stands, with a pyramidal pagoda in the centre, supporting many pieces of singular value or beauty.

The whole gallery may be seen at the first entry; and, from the reflected light, the distribution of parts, and the splendor of the materials, which are here displayed to the greatest advantage, it may not inaptly be compared to the fanciful descriptions of enchanted palaces, in poesy and romance.

This assemblage of ancient porcelain consists of an immense quantity of both useful and ornamental articles, in every species of that elegant manufacture, from the earliest ages till the art is said to have been lost. Some specimens exhibit its infant state, which, according to the Abbé Raynal, in his History of the Indies, may be reasonably supposed to be three thousand years ago. The remote antiquity of these may be inferred, from the rudeness of the designs, and the imper-

fect crackled appearance of the baking. It is long before art can be brought to any degree of perfection. To glaze and bake in the high style of many pieces in this collection, must have required reiterated attempts, and the experience of years—perhaps of ages.

Among other varieties, are many of the choicest pieces of the old blue and white, and pale japan brown edge, so much esteemed by the curious. Likewise a numerous assortment of those very scarce and valuable sorts, the antique *bleu celeste*, and deep purple.

It is impossible, however, to enter into a minute description of articles so various and extensive; but we cannot refrain from particularizing a few, and enumerating the principal sources from which they were drawn, by the ingenious and indefatigable Collector.

Among many other pieces deserving attention, are a pair of small bottles, once the property of Queen Anne—A large japan tea-pot, a present from Louis XIV. to the Duke of Richelieu—Two smaller ones from the Collection of the Duke of Orleans, father to Egalité—Some pieces from the late Princess Amelia's Cabinet—Many from the Portland Museum, and from the celebrated collection of the Duke d'Aumont at Paris—A singular piece from the Duke of Argyle's curiosities, in the former reign—Several articles from the

late Duchess of Kingston's—from Selima, Countess of Huntingdon's—from M. Calonne's—and M. Beaumarchais' Collections. Five ornamental pieces, presented by a Nabob to a Governor of Bengal, in the reign of William III. possess uncommon beauty. A large white tea-pot, once in the possession of Oliver Cromwell, will be deemed a curiosity; and it is not uninteresting to observe the different forms of the tea-pots in general in this gallery, the metamorphoses they have undergone, and their variations from the present prevailing shape.—Two pieces of jasper China, somewhat resembling shells, are remarkably beautiful and rare, as are several of that scarce sort, called honeycomb. It should also be observed, that some specimens are unique in their kind.

A collateral room, adjoining the entrance to the gallery, is filled with scarce and elegant specimens of Roman and old earthen ware, too numerous to mention. A delf jar of the latter kind was evidently fabricated, long before the Dutch threw off the Spanish yoke, as appears from the dress of the figures—But one of the most singular curiosities, is a small piece representing a fish, which was brought from Athens, and is supposed to be coeval with that celebrated republic.

In this apartment, likewise, is a small select collection of the finest old black and gold wooden

japan;—and a numerous and beautiful assortment of old copper enamels of the black and white kind, and also in various colours, on subjects both sacred and profane, some of them not unworthy of the pencil of Raphael.

These slight notices may suffice to shew the value and extent of this collection. The curious, and real amateurs, will satisfy themselves as to its peculiar merits.

GARDENS.*

Stay your rude steps! whose throbbing breasts enfold
Th' insatiate thirst of glory, or of gold!
For you no DRYAD decks her roseate bowers,
For you her sparkling urn no NAIAD pours:
Unmark'd by you, light GRACES skim the green,
And hovering CUPIDS spread their wings unseen.

DARWIN.

THE gardens, or pleasure grounds, occupy an area of two hundred acres, and upwards. On

* “The original Gardens at **BLenheim**, begun in 1704, were finished in three years, under the superintendence and direction of a Mr. Wise, who likewise made very considerable improvements at **KENSINGTON** and **HAMPTON COURT**, under the patronage of **Queen Anne**. The performances at **BLenheim** were reckoned the greatest of all his undertakings, and were indeed wonderful for the time, as appears from existing plans and descriptions, though in a style now justly exploded.”

SWITZER'S RECREATIONS IN GARDENING, &c.

part of the north, and the east side, they are surrounded by a sunk fence, which, without breaking the grandeur of the scene, serves to separate the parts that compose it. On the west side, they make a bold descent to the lake, which falling over a rocky barrier of considerable height at the south-west angle, formed likewise the southern boundary, before the more recent additions of a considerable portion of the adjoining vale, and of the face of the opposite hill. Nature, indeed, seems to have placed this fine chain, which describes the figure of a bow on the west and south of the river, as the only regular termination of the pleasure grounds, and the line of demarcation between them and the park. The lofty umbrageous trees, which cover its side and brow, form a noble back-ground, and give an unity and finish to the scene. The features of the vale, likewise, through which the river winds, from the cascade as far as the new bridge, entirely correspond with the rest of the picture: art might heighten them, but nature could not have been more propitious; they invite embellishment from the facility with which it might be applied. Or may it not be an effect of the justest taste, to render the transition from the more ornamental style of the garden to the first shades of the ruder majesty of the park, so very imperceptible, that the eye, at a small distance, cannot determine where the one

commences and the other ends? In animate nature, the close alliance between the last order of one class and the first of another, has been ever considered as an instance of beautiful design and harmonious connection; and why may not the same hold good in inanimate objects? The just gradation of tints, and the easy blending of colours, are indisputably requisite to the composition of a perfect whole!

FLOWER GARDEN.

The usual entrance into the pleasure-grounds, is a little to the left of the eastern gate of BLENHEIM, the usual approach. The EAST FRONT first salutes the view,—a chaste and elegant piece of architecture, with a large projecting bow in the centre. Immediately before it, lies the FLOWER GARDEN, which occupies about an acre of a cheerful lawn of a modern breadth, but extending a considerable way into the park; at first fringed with little clumps of evergreens, encircled and interspersed with flowers and deciduous shrubs, then broken by a few scattered trees, which, rising on different sides of the small fence, effectually conceal it; and afterwards lined by stately trees, that throw a finely chequered shade on the verdant sward below, and ranging in irregular pomp, preclude stiffness from mingling with beauty.

The Flower Garden, though obviously a very delightful and inviting appendage, being so contiguous and accessible, is only a recent creation in this spot. On the side next the green-house is a spacious and elegant alcove, commanding the whole of this elysian scene, in which a succession of hardy flowers and shrubs, arranged in twenty oval beds tastefully disposed, and including at least 200 different kinds of roses, fill up the seasons with their varied charms, and offer incense to FLORA. From a seat at the extremity of these parterres, fronting the north, is a pleasing view of the Triumphal Gate in one direction, and of the Pillar which crowns a swelling lawn in another. The last is particularly attractive.

See waving woods their aged arms display,
And quivering sunbeams shed a partial day :
Long vistas shooting from the wondering eyes,
And bloom perennial pour unnumber'd dyes !
See flower-crown'd FLORA spread her lucid train,
And give to BEAUTY, all the smiling plain ;
While sylvan PAN amid the shady trees,
Joins in the concert with the swelling breeze.

A walk of pebbly gravel, of the most beautiful texture and regularity (which however prevails in the pleasure-grounds, and blends utility with ornament) winding to the east, between rising plantations and clumps of trees and shrubs in various shape, at intervals is opened to highly embellish-

ed lawn; and soon taking an easy bend to the south, conducts to the

TEMPLE OF HEALTH,

charged with the following elegant and loyal inscription, on a highly polished marble tablet:

DEO MAXIMO CONSERVATORI,

ET PROVIDENTIÆ DIVINÆ:

OB RECUPERATAM GEORGII TERTII,
REGIS OPTIMI, PIENTISSIMI SALUTEM,

HOC MARMOR

GEORGIUS DUX MARLBURIENSIS
EXPLETO DESIDERIO, VOTIQUE COMPOS,
IN ALIQUOD GRATI ANIMI TESTIMONIUM,
LÆTUS, LUBENSQUE DEDICAVIT.

ANNO SALUTIS HUMANÆ

MDCCLXXXIX.

Over the tablet is a beautiful medallion of his Majesty. This structure is adorned with Corinthian capitals. It emerges from a small thicket, which backs it and determines its site, and without imposing the idea of solitude, renders it sufficiently sequestered. Before we reach this temple, the Triumphal Arch and Woodstock Tower are seen in pleasing perspective. From hence, the scene gradually changes. Instead of embellished lawn, we become embosomed in trees of venerable majesty. The park and gardens seem to unite, or rather their distinction is lost. The trimness of the

walk, and the occasional sight of evergreens, alone discriminate the latter.

The parts unite,
And strength of shade contends with strength of light.

Open grove, at an agreeable distance, on each side, continues for a considerable space. The whole is a delightful HOME-WALK, sheltered by the winding of its direction from every blast: possessing sufficient variety in every part, with an aspect continually improving.

From this pleasing route, however, we are drawn aside to the sequestered spot now occupied by the

AVIARY.

A diverticle from the principal walk inclines to an open grove on the right, enlivened, during the vernal season more especially, by the clamorous cawing and busy occupation of rooks, of which an ample colony for many years have here taken up their abode. Evergreens and deciduous shrubs, with various clumps or beds, filled with choice hardy American plants, are scattered over the space, formerly appropriated to the FLOWER GARDEN, but now devoted to the AVIARY, which extends in the form of a crescent, on each side of a small neat TEMPLE on the right, originally dedicated to *Flora*, now however serving only as a seat, or a connecting link between

the two divisions of the AVIARY. This new edifice, from the design of Mr. Henry Hakewill, is constructed of wood and wire-work, and is of considerable elegance and expense, but certainly erected on too low ground, had not the soil in front been removed, to give it greater elevation, and to preserve it from damp. It contains six compartments in each wing, stocked with gold and silver pheasants, some curious doves, and a pair of Curassoa birds, all which are under the superintendence of one of the gardeners, whose unobtrusive habitation stands in the back ground.

In the centre of the aviary plot, which may include about an acre of ground, bounded by an irregular line of stately trees, is an obelisk of porphyry, with four white marble vases round the base, filled with annuals; and indeed the whole area preserves much of the original character of the parterre.

From a gently bending walk which crosses the southern boundary of this retired spot, is a beautiful vista, terminated by the Buckinghamshire hills, and in the near distance, presenting a striking view of Kidlington spire. Through open grove, as at the entrance, a continuation of this walk conducts over the lawn towards the cascade; and this route being the nearest, and including the more prominent objects, is usually preferred by company who cannot enjoy a leisure view of

the numerous attractions of the gardens. Behind the grove on the south, is another connecting path. Indeed there are different outlets through the grove, in which the AVIARY is embosomed; but to proceed in the regular, though more circuitous tour, we take that near the south-east angle; and after being shaded by trees for a short space, the scene opens to the left, but soon shuts again with aggravated gloom, though the trees are less umbrageous than formerly, but not less peopled with the aërial tenants already mentioned. The sweet smelling lime, the dark chesnut, and the airy beech, with evergreens below, bear the chief proportion here. All is still—all is solemn. The contrast with the highly embellished plot in front of the aviary is very striking, and with the view that speedily opens still more remarkable.

KITCHEN GARDENS.

An ornamental tripod marks the point where the principal walk, which we quitted, to visit the aviary, is joined by that behind the grove, which we have just left. The palladian gate or entrance into the kitchen gardens, is almost in front as we emerge from the trees; and the eye darts over a cheerful landscape to the south. On this side, the walls of the kitchen gardens, which are fourteen feet high, are concealed by irregular plantations of laurels and other shrubs, thinly scattered

with forest trees. From the gate, we trace their vast extent clothed with the choicest fruit trees; we behold an area of eight acres, while four more remain unseen, furnished with every article of culinary use, or of elegance in the dessert, and replete with every requisite appendage for bringing it to perfection. The HOT HOUSES are constructed on an excellent principle, and produce the finest pines and grapes. Art here amply supplies the want of a warmer sky. The CONSERVATORY occupies an angle fronting the south.

Falling into the HOME-WALK at this place, the deviation from which has been previously mentioned, we soon enter the SHEEP-WALK, which is half a mile in length, and through its whole extent abounding with rural imagery. Frequently covered with a flock of more than a thousand sheep, all of the most beautiful and valuable, and some of the most curious breeds; this space, though possessing features of characteristic negligence, is not less rich, or less animated than the most favourite spots in the garden. It was formerly open to the park, but is now separated from it by a sunk fence and iron palisadoes, which extend to the new bridge, and thus give greater seclusion to the spot.

The open grove winds away to the right, and on this hand we catch a glimpse of the south front of

the Palace, which is thrown into various perspective as we advance. In other directions we enjoy a picturesque view of Beckley Hill, just peeping over the intervening heights; of Witham's lofty woods rising to the summit of Botley, where the trees range in solitary state; and through the long perspective of a rich champaign, in which ENSHAM Tower forms a very conspicuous object, when illumined with a morning sun, the distant WHITE HORSE Hills are seen to elevate themselves into a back-ground. Nor are remote pictures alone attractive at this hour: the deep shade that darkens the neighbouring village of BLADON, is finely contrasted with the level beams that glance on the water below. At every changing season of the day, indeed, some new beauty is developed, or the scenes are thrown into a different perspective, by the aid of light and shade. The evening sun is not less propitious than the morning, for giving a brilliant effect to objects, in this delightful perambulation.

Proceeding,—in one place, the NEW BRIDGE, as it is called, appears broken and ruinous by the bend of a tree that overhangs the bank; in another it shews its arches entire, and even the lower visible reach of water is seen sparkling through its balustrades; farther the centre arch alone is perceptible; and sometimes the whole is lost. Such is the effect of grouping and combining!

The lawn is sprinkled with beautiful groups of trees; the majestic oak, with pendent inclination to the stream, is the frequent ornament of the slope.

About the middle of this walk, the top of **HANDBOROUGH Spire**,* though nearly three miles off, appears emerging from the bosom of the deep wood beyond the lake; and close on the right is seen the

SHEPHERD'S COT,

a little thatched edifice, composed of the trunks of trees fancifully arranged, backed by a clump, and shaded by horse-chesnuts in front.

Near this spot, we may pause to contemplate the beauties which the changing scene displays. Nothing can be more picturesque than **BLADON** when gilded with an evening sun: the battle-mented tower, and here and there the end of a building, glow with the crimson of his beams; or the window, partially shaded by intervening trees, reflects them like living fire. **CLAUDE** would have caught the tints with rapture; he

* It is almost unnecessary to remark, that from the growth or decay of trees, objects in a few years will either be disclosed or concealed, or changes in picturesque scenery take place, for which either the natural or artificial painter cannot always provide. Accuracy in delineations and descriptions ought always to be attempted; but the reason assigned, will prevent the most careful from attaining it.

would have combined the objects into a picture; and on its effect, he might have rested the immortality of his fame.

CASCADE AND ITS ACCOMPANIMENTS.

A little beyond the Shepherd's Cot is the first opening of the CASCADE; and for some space it forms a principal attraction. The water seems to burst from the deep wood that bounds the head; its course is totally hid by the bend, by the figure of the banks, and the effect of plantation. Every step we descend towards the cascade, the embellishments thicken, the scene becomes more illustrious. Groups of acacia, cedar, poplar, chesnut, and beech, decorate the declivity down to the river; and beyond it, at a proportionate distance, the back ground, as far as the commencement of the new Garden, is adorned with a profusion of hawthorns, surmounted by noble pendent trees, which, stretching round as far as the eye can reach, terminate in the near horizon.

But before we sink into the vale, it will not be unpleasing to take a retrospective view of the landscape we are leaving behind. The lofty spire of KIDLINGTON church seems to belong to the park; the distant hills formerly observed, are cast into different perspective; and a new and wider range is displayed, farther than the natural vision can distinguish objects, and till the blue

hills of BUCKINGHAMSHIRE close with the bounding sky. Among these, ASHRIDGE, the seat of the Earl of Bridgewater, may be ascertained in a clear day

The obelisk of the FOUNTAIN soon peeps between a little woody island and the cascade; and the grand RIVER, which a few paces before was invisible, bursts at once on the eye in a broad sheet, without apparent continuity or connection. Before we reach the termination of the sheep-walk, we lose the cascade on the left; to it, however, we at last descend, between clumps and groups of the most luxuriant and delicate trees of various climes, intermixed with flowers and shrubs of the utmost fragrance and beauty. The ground, which at first is highest on the left, soon assumes a determined superiority on the right. It is thrown into masses with a masterly hand; it has received every embellishment that refined taste can confer on natural beauty; and we enjoy the touch of art, without waking the idea that revolts at its flaunting display.

Here various trees compose a chequer'd scene,
Glowing in gay diversities of green;
There the full stream thro' intermingling glades,
Shines a broad lake, or falls in loud cascades.

In the vicinity of the cascade, whose sides are finely shaded, the water is quite lost above. Even

from the bridge that fronts it at fifty feet distance, we only see the fall, without tracing the supply. The charming reach below appears in its most varied features from this bridge, which connects the gardens: and when the full stream devolves from the rocky barrier, and bounds from one point to another in foamy pride with deafening roar, nothing can be more grateful to a contemplative mind than such a scene, and such a situation.

Down the steep fall devolve the foaming tides,

Unfading verdure clothes th' aspiring sides.

Emblem of life! where waves on waves arise,

While HOPE looks up, and views serener skies,

Where still the troublous sea incessant roars.

And still HOPE flatters, as we eye the shores.

NEW GARDEN.

The NEW GARDEN, which we now enter, though of no very great extent, contains many beauties peculiar to itself, many views of magnificent and appropriate scenery. Following the course of the river on the left, we soon reach NEWFOUND WELL, a mineral spring of the chalybeate kind, said to possess very active virtues, before they were weakened by the expansion of the lake, whose waters are now supposed to mix with it. In the front of a dark clump rises a pedestal supporting an urn, and from an aperture in the former gushes the spring; and being received into an antique bason, charged with numerous fancy

figures, in alto relievo, much injured, flows out near the top by the mouths of two lions, and quickly mixes with the river. Again we have a view of the New Bridge, and of a serpentine reach of water, embracing the island, and gliding on with glassy smoothness. The

FOUNTAIN.

next attracts our notice.

There River-Gods reclin'd, at ease explore
A scene more lovely than their native shore;
Confess HESPERIA boasts no charms that vie
With the bright landscapes which around them lie.

It is situated at the bottom of the hill, and forms an object not unworthy of its place and destination. In the centre of an elegant capacious bason, where marble dolphins seem to sport, stands the base, formed of a species of porous stone, permeable by the water, and thrown together in rude pomp, with a cavern from east to west, from which appear to issue a lion and a sea-horse, the attributes of Europe and Africa, finely designed.

On the four extremities of the rock, which support the obelisk, are four River-Gods, sculptured in white marble, with a delicacy and expression not to be surpassed. These are intended to represent the DANUBE, the NILE, the LA PLATA,

and the GANGES, the four principal rivers of the different quarters of the globe. The DANUBE rests his right leg on an oar*—The NILE veils his head with classical propriety—The AMERICAN River-God lifts up his left-hand and eyes in surprise, as if first made known to the rest of the world—The ASIATIC River-God, with a placid look, stretches out his hand to a serpent crawling, and to a shell. This last seems to be a different design from the original, where the GANGES is represented as recumbent, crowned with sedge, and a rudder between his legs, with the palm-tree behind.

The following arms appear on one side of the base of the obelisk;—under a coronet in a bordure of lions and castles, per saltier, for Castile and Leon, two baskets and five. On the opposite side, in a bordure of saltiers, under a coronet, two wolves, with lambs in their mouths.

Above, on the square pedestal of the obelisk, which is of white marble, is the subsequent inscription in four different languages, Latin, Greek, Italian, and Spanish.

* In the Vatican at Rome is an ancient sculpture of the TIBER in the same attitude. May not Bernini have intended that river instead of the Danube?

AD INNOCENTIUM XI. SUMMUM PONTIFICEM.

PRO. CAROLO. II. HISPANIARUM REGE

EXCELC: D. D. GASPAR: DE HARO, ET

GUZMAN.

MURCHIO. DE. CARPIO. ET HELICHEO ORATOR.

AD TYPUM MOLIS. IN AGONALI FORO ERECTÆ.

AB EQUITE. BERNINO. OPUS. HOC. EXSTRUI.

JUSSIT, EODEM. DIRIGENTE. QUI. INTERIM.

DUM PERFICERETUR. DEFUNCTUS.

HOC: POSTHUMO. PARTU: INEXHAUSTAM.

MENTIS. FOECUNDITATEM CLAUSIT.

ANNO D: M: DC: LXXXI.

This fine piece of sculpture, the last work of BERNINI, and a copy from the magnificent fountain in the Piazza Navona at Rome, was a present from the Spanish ambassador at the Papal court, to the first Duke of Marlborough. It has only been recently erected; and during the many years it lay neglected, was much damaged, and part of its characteristic appendages and adjuncts lost. Still, however, it bears a close resemblance to the noble original; proves an ornament to the gardens, and the admiration of spectators.

From the Fountain, the path meanders up hill. The left is open to the charming vale through which the river glides: the right is occasionally shaded by groups of trees. Almost every step presents a new scene: the transitions are sudden, but never harsh; even the strong contrast between the elegant sculpture we have just left, and the

wild ROCK SEATS that occupy the brow, gives an additional impression to each. Above these is a noble view into the park: the HIGH LODGE, with its antique battlements amidst an amphitheatre of venerable trees, is a striking object in the landscape. From this spot we wind to the right, and fresh beauties again arrest the attention. To paint every change of scenery that presents itself in the space of an hundred yards would be impossible; the impression can only be conveyed by the eye;—the happiest description would fail. At one point we have a glimpse of the river; at another perhaps it is lost; the turrets of the Palace just emerge; an expanse of water with a forest line of wood draws the view; and, at a few paces distance, the Palace, the river, the two principal bridges, and the fine terrace on the west of the gardens, all burst with irresistible beauty and attraction. At this spot, the sublime predominates in a very high degree; and frigid indeed must that taste be, which will not feel and confess the energy of the scene. When the rising sun throws its horizontal rays on the gilded orbs of Blenheim, the tops of the trees catch his radiance, and the withdrawing shade lightly floats on the surface of the lake; nature does not furnish a picture of more brilliancy than this.

A little farther, and the intervening groups allow only glimpses;—again, the prospect opens,

the park displays its sylvan honours on the north, and on the east, the Chiltern hills bound the sight. At the utmost extent of vision is WINCHENDON, formerly the seat of the Duke of Whar-ton, now the property of the Marlborough family. There is something grand in the idea: the vast space between is swallowed up; and fancy combining the distant domains in the same landscape, gives a sanction and a solution to the magnificence around.

On the right, as we turn down towards the Iron-Bridge, stands l'ARROTINO, or as it is usually called, the LISTENING SLAVE, a fine cast in bronze from the antique, by BENZI. Descending to the river, from distant views the transition becomes instantaneous to near ones. The water is seen flowing round to the cascade: the bank on the right is abrupt and rocky, chiefly planted with sumach; on the left, it is adorned with the fairest rising plantations, which are yearly rendering the spot more characteristically romantic.

all around
 Umbrageous grots, and caves of cool recess,
 And murmuring waters down the slope dispers'd,
 Or held, by fringed banks, in crystal lakes,
 Compose a rural seat of various view.

MILTON.

On the Blenheim side of the Iron-Bridge, the cascade and its accompaniments are wholly lost;

the former can only be traced by its murmurs and its dashing. The walk now runs along the left of the upper river: the lower is scarcely perceptible. Even the inferior path, by which we descend from the sheep-walk to the cascade, though only a few yards below, is rendered entirely distinct, by the figure of the ground, and the groups that adorn it. As we advance to the angle of the sheep-walk, the ground becomes gradually more elevated. Beyond, the broad expanse of water on the left, a fine outline of pendent wood stretches along to an indeterminate length; on the other hand is highly decorated lawn. The TERRACE may be said to commence at this point; and its captivating charms are gradually developed, as we proceed. From a moderate elevation above the level of the lake, it rises to a bold declivity, feathered down to the brink with majestic trees, interspersed with plantations of younger growth, grouped and arranged in the most enchanting style; while the wild forest that clothes the opposite bank is reflected in the crystal tide below. The lake is usually farther enlivened with various pleasure vessels, disposed in such a manner as may best adorn this illustrious scene. Behind is a delightful perspective of the back ground on the south-west; and the cascade glitters in all its grandeur.

As we approximate the level of the Terrace,

the shaft of CHURCHILL'S PILLAR appears in front above the surrounding trees : by degrees it opens to its very base. The dark groves in the northern part of the park begin to display themselves ; and couched in the front of one, the celebrated BATH of ROSAMOND may be dimly discerned. The water too assumes a variety of figures ; the outline becomes more indented ; and a collateral branch of undefined extent, running up a deep vale from the principal stream, without appearing to derive its sole importance from it, has the pleasing effect of seeming to augment its current. DITCHLEY Woods form the horizon ; these fall into the back-ground of the scene, at a distance sufficient for greatness, and without any disjunction of parts. Here we reach the

TEMPLE OF DIANA,

which stands on the summit of the declivity.—We survey the landscape with rapture—we confess the *ne plus ultra* of picturesque embellishment. This temple indeed marks the happy spot where the assemblage of different attractions operate with singular advantage. All is great—all is executed on a scale of proportionate magnificence ; and though every part of the gardens has peculiar charms, this terrace—this point in particular, as a Home View, combines more than all, and exhibits almost every different excellence in each.

The temple itself is a beautiful and stately structure, designed by Sir William Chambers; and its situation corresponds with that on the east side of the gardens. In the front are four pillars with Ionic capitals; and on the pediment is this dedication:

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΔΙ.

ΑΓΡΙΑΙ-ΙΑΔΙ.

ΟΡΕΣΤΙΑΔΙ.

“To the Ionian, rural, mountain-ranging Diana.”

On the back within, is a central medallion, representing, in bas-relief, HIPPOLITUS offering a wreath of flowers to DIANA; and on two others, united to this by a festoon, are the subsequent verses from the Hippolitus of EURIPIDES, with the annexed elegant English version.

Σοι τόνδε πλεκτον σεφανον εξ ακηρατη

Λειμωνος, ω Δεσποινα, κοσμησας φερω,

Ενθ' ετε ποιμην αξιοι φερειν βοτα,

Ουδ' ηλθε πω σιδηρος, αλλ' ακηρατου

Μελισσα λειμων' ηρινον διερχεται,

Αιδως δε ποταμιαισι κηπευει δροσοις.

To thee, bright Goddess, these fair flowers I bring,
A chaplet woven from th' untainted mead,
Thy cool sequester'd haunt, where never yet
Shepherd approach'd; where the rude hind ne'er heav'd,
Th' unhallow'd axe: nor voice nor sound is heard,
Save the low murmuring of the vernal bee.
The day-spring from above the dew distils
Genial and mild, from the pure stream exhal'd,
On every fragrant herb, and favourite flower.

Hurried on by the splendor of more capital objects, we forgot to notice another cast in bronze of the ROMAN WRESTLERS, by BENZI. It stands on the right, a little before we approach the temple, and well deserves attention as a just representation of the antique.

A short way beyond the temple of DIANA, we enjoy many brilliant scenes in the park; and winding round over the charming lawn before the south front of the Palace, finish the tour of the gardens with impressions of pleasure gradually raised to the highest, and permanently fixed by the splendor of the concluding scenery.

The intersecting walks generally retire from the sight, but are never wanting for necessary communication: they conduct to the principal subordinate scenes; they occupy the happiest spaces. By following their direction, we are sure of meeting with some object in our progress to compensate for the toil; some beauty is disclosed which would otherwise be lost; or scenes are thrown in perspective, or heightened by contrast, in a manner different from what we observed before.

The occasional recurrence also of the garden chair, the plain bench, or the circular seat round the trunk of some umbrageous tree, by

presenting opportunities for rest, prevent the idea of lassitude. Thus, in our journey through life, it is not always the actual use of the accommodations we possess, that adds to our comfort; it is the reflection that we may command them in the hour of need, and that we have it in our power to gratify the wish as soon as it is felt. But these are not simply objects of ornament and convenience; they generally point out scenes, which repose may contemplate with delight, and fancy combine into picture.

Here a thousand beauties, originating from design, appear fortuitous to the eye. Though traversing a garden where taste has exhausted its skill, we incessantly indulge the idea of being only contemplating the natural charms of the country, and tracing delights of rich variety and unlimited extent.

In this tour, indeed, we have omitted many circumstances which in an inferior place would have deservedly claimed regard. Here littleness is absorbed in grandeur, and prettiness in magnificence. This marks the prevailing character; and should it ever, in the minutest instance, be sacrificed to its opposite, Blenheim will lose that principal beauty—consistency, though it may borrow the fairest flowers from the garland of novelty. Of this, however, there is no danger. The character of this place is now sufficiently

established in the public estimation; and its acknowledged superiority in natural charms and highly embellished landscape, is attested by the annually increasing number of visitors. And who that has seen Blenheim once, does not wish to see it again!

RIVER *.

THE River, which covers the whole extent of a spacious valley, bending in the happiest style, and affording the most profuse variety of picturesque features in the sublime, the beautiful, and the tranquil, when viewed with its accompaniments, is indisputably the most superb piece of artificial water in this kingdom. It is chiefly

* If the words *river* and *lake* are sometimes applied to the same thing, it is hoped the reader will not impute this to ignorance or error: the water at *Blenheim* partakes of the nature of both; it is a *River*, because it has a progressive motion; it is also a *Lake*, because it spreads far beyond its original channel. Thus uniting the distinguishing beauties and characteristics of each, it rises to the pre-eminence of sublimity in kind. It is proper, however, to remark, that it generally receives the name of the *Lake* from its commencement to the grand bridge, and of the *Great Water* down to the cascade.—The whole is stocked with abundance of fine fish, such as pike, perch, carp, tench, &c. Pikes have sometimes been caught here weighing nearly 30lbs. These may be truly called “the tyrants of the watery plain.” In a certain part, a very few years ago, 150 brace of fine carp and tench were drawn up in one net, by the fisherman.

supplied by the GLYME *, which still, in a great measure, retains its original direction, its channel being expanded rather than altered: so favourable has Nature been to the operations of art!

It enters the park in the vale which separates Old from New Woodstock, flowing under a belt of rising plantations, and issuing to light by a bridge of seven arches, the minuteness and multiplicity of which have been thought to derogate from grandeur, though the whole is well adapted to give the idea of a supply, equal to the magnitude of the lake.

In other points of view, a thick grove, and beautiful groups of Lombardy poplars, and other trees that love the streams, by concealing the source, promote the same desirable effect. The banks at first are low: on one side they soon become bold and winding; on the other, they have little elevation, but are happily varied.

The lake quickly spreading to a great expanse, stretches towards QUEEN POOL†, where it forms

* The Glyme rises near Heythrop Park, the seat of the Earl of Shrewsbury, and flowing past Kiddington and Glympton, or the town or village on the Glyme, washes Wootton, and soon after receiving Barton brook, winds round towards Woodstock, through whose willowy meads it runs in several channels, which unite in Blenheim lake.

† So called from Philippa, Queen of Edward III. The Fisherman's House and appendages, and the adjoining *duckery*, containing some very curious species, deserve notice here.

a small creek, with various islets, stews, buildings, and enclosures chiefly lost in trees; then taking a determined course, it seems to seek the opposite shore, in its progress flowing round QUEEN ELIZABETH'S ISLAND*, a most delightful spot, clothed with aquatic trees and shrubs of the utmost beauty and variety, which connect the groups on the banks; and soon becoming embayed on the left, it winds round to the Grand Bridge, narrowing as it advances, to an adequate breadth with that noble structure.

From the bridge, a most capital expanse of water again catches the eye; an expanse unrivalled by the finest English river †, unmixed with the sea; and which, washing the remote banks, varies with their direction, makes a long diversion up a vale that forms a right angle with its bed,

* This is part of the ancient causeway leading to the old Manor House, which stood about 100 yards farther north. The Lombardy poplars planted here begin to acquire too determined an ascendancy over their congeners; and are too much spread over the surface. A few, closely planted, and forming a single group may frequently embellish a landscape; but seen individually, they are more proper to conceal defects than to encrease the beauties of the scene.

† Brown, who superintended the early improvements here, in his usual consequential manner, has been heard to boast, "That the Thames would never forgive him for what he had done at Blenheim." Had he lived to the present time, he would have been sensible how much his most finished labours may be surpassed.

and affords the representation of a collateral stream: then rolling a seemingly enlarged volume, it winds round, and washes the foot of the declivity, on which part of the gardens lie; and on the other side it is bounded by a considerable hill, feathered down with a noble wood to the water's edge, and frequently reflected on its surface.

Crystal lakes,
O'er which the giant oak, himself a grove,
Flings his romantic branches, and beholds
His reverend image in th' expanse below.

MASON.

Preserving one general unvarying direction for a considerable length, it gradually narrows; and viewed from the grand bridge, appears landlocked and embayed. Several pleasure vessels of various construction, riding at anchor, swans sailing in conscious pride, and other aquatic fowl, indigenous as well as foreign, exercising their native propensities, unite to enliven the watery scene. When tranquil, the reflected and inverted images in the stream present a picture, which fancy contemplates with mild delight; when agitated with winds, its rippling bosom and wavy dash are lively emblems of the sea, to which it then bears some resemblance.

At the point where it appears embayed, it passes under a light iron bridge, simple and unadorned, and characteristic of its destination; and making

a pretty sudden bend, it tumbles down a barrier of massy rocks, with a force equal to its copiousness; and with a fall of eighteen feet perpendicular, and twenty-seven with the angle it forms. Above this cascade, are an hundred and fifty acres of water: below it is a continuation of an hundred more.

Recovering its level, the river flows with a serpentine sweep through an expanded vale, embellished with scattered groups of flourishing young plantation; and at an agreeable distance, stretches another face of the hill already mentioned as a boundary, covered with trees whose pendency and age render them at once picturesque and venerable. But though in this reach the river admits an oval woody islet, its channel becomes now more contracted than before; and its style partakes rather of the beautiful than the sublime. Reaching the New Bridge, a very elegant modern structure, it inclines with the course of the vale, and touching near Bladon, makes a determined bend to the right. The banks on both sides at this point are swelling lawn, with little clumps, connected by single trees, disposed without the least shew of intention, but uniting to produce the happiest effect.

From hence, the river takes a variety of charming turns, chiefly with a strong inclination to the

right, doubling as it were on itself, and circumscribing the extremity of the hill which accompanies it the greatest part of its course. In one place a fine sheet of water spreads before the eye, and invites progress by its apparent continuity; in another, the trees seem to embay it, and we advance a considerable way, before we can detect the deception.

From the first determined sweep near BLADON, a gravel walk on the left follows the direction of the river. This walk is bounded one side by a belt of thick plantation; on the other, a few scattered trees range with the stream. Beyond the river, we are charmed with all the diversity of pleasing scenery: a small grove first presents itself, close to the verge of the tide; a few irregular trees next succeed; sometimes a clump planted at the termination of a reach, by advancing to the belt on the opposite shore, appears to land-lock the stream; then again we are delighted with open lawn and diversified landscape. At last, the river passing under a low bridge with numerous arches, precipitates itself down a steep cascade, and at the same instant falls into the EVENLODE*, which gliding in an

* The EVENLODE obtains its name from a village, so called, in Worcestershire. In its course, it receives several little brooks, washes Charlbury, and serpentizing through fertile meadows, at length forms the southern boundary of BLENHEIM PARK.

opposite direction through verdant meads, winds under the park to receive the tributary GLYME. The united rivers forming a woody island immediately after their junction, meander through a continuation of meads, and dispense beauty and fertility, as they flow to join the classic ISIS.

The effect occasioned by two rivers hastening to meet each other, and then bending almost at right angles with their former course, is as pleasing as it is singular and romantic. No awkward termination is here to be traced, no disgusting display of art to heighten the scene; Taste unfolds the beauties of Nature with a delicate touch, and Art is only the handmaid to her charms.

So many circumstances lend their aid to embellish this spot and its vicinity, that we scruple not to pronounce it one of the most delightful in the precincts of Blenheim: but it retires from the view, and its unobtrusive charms are therefore seldom seen. While scenes less captivating force attention by a bold display, these, like modesty, shun the public eye, and are only visited by the discerning few. May we not add, such is the fate of unassuming merit; its lovely qualities are only casually noticed, and the impression they make is often too evanescent to avail them!

In this sequestered situation, the contemplative man

——— sublim'd from low desires,
To commune with his secret soul retires;
Thinks on the present, scans his future state,
Explores what ills, what blessings round him wait;
Or loves a retrospective glance to cast
On many a dear ecstatic rapture past;
To mark those few, those fleeting hours that smil'd,
Like flowers that bloom amid a desert wild;
Those scenes of long-lamented joys to mourn,—
Nay sigh for pains that never can return.

On the whole—the water at Blenheim, as a very elegant writer* observes, “in size, form, “and style, is equal to the majesty of the scene, “and is designed in the spirit, is executed with “the liberality of the original donation, when “this residence of a mighty monarch was bestowed by a great people, as a munificent reward, on the hero who had deserved best of “his country.”

* Wheatley on Modern Gardening.

PARK*.

The PARK, which under the auspices of the present Duke, has received every possible improvement,

Plann'd by his taste, and planted by his hand,

is one continued galaxy of charming prospects, and agreeably diversified scenes. It is extra-parochial; and contains about two thousand seven hundred acres, round which are the most enchanting rides, chiefly shaded towards the bound-

* That vast space which lies *without* the River has received the appropriate appellation of the GREAT PARK; the portion which is in a great measure surrounded by it, of the LITTLE PARK. *See the Plan.*

The following meteorological phenomenon deserves to be recorded. On the evening of the 29th of November, 1797, a freezing rain began to fall, and in the course of the night incruited every tree, shrub, and blade of grass, to a thickness almost incredible. In consequence of this, many trees, and an immense number of branches were brought to the ground. In Blenheim Park, to which, and a small surrounding space, this phenomenon was confined, nearly one thousand loads of wood were destroyed. The very rooks had their wings frozen, and fell from their perches. Nothing could be more beautiful than the trees in their brilliant coats of mail. By candle-light, every leaf of evergreens seemed to have a diamond pendent at its extremity.

Where similar phenomena have occurred, it has always been found that they were partial in their effects, and ran in a narrow track.

ary with a deep belt of various trees, evergreens, and deciduous shrubs, whose mingled foliage exhibits the different gradations of tints, from the most faint to the most obfuscated green; while plantations of corresponding figure and growth on the park side, sometimes range with the former, and sometimes breaking into groups, with large interstices between, relieve the tædium of continued uniformity, and open the most brilliant prospects. Indeed the effects of polished taste, and sublime in design, are no where more perceptible than in the boundless views which at intervals present themselves; the limits of the park being in general quite concealed; and the whole surrounding country, varied with hills and vales, spires, towers, and villas, appearing as one wide extended landscape. In the internal part, new improvements are continually adopting, and new plantations rising, wherever they can contribute to the beauty or the luxuriance of the scene.

—Hence the poor are cloth'd, the hungry fed,
Health to himself, and to his children bread
The labourer bears,——

During the vernal season, the profusion of blossomed hawthorns, in all the wild luxuriance of nature, scattered among the forest trees, diffuse the most delightful fragrance, while they en-

crease the general effect; and even when stripped of their foliage they are not ungrateful to the eye, that is enamoured of vegetative beauty in its every aspect. The humble shrub aptly contrasts with the lofty tree; and though confined within narrow limits, like unaspiring poverty, is not less necessary than its type, to fill up the interstices of space, and to complete the plan of creation.

In different places also we meet with venerable oaks, that have seen some centuries pass over their heads, and yet flourish in a green old age. It would be easy to point out some of extraordinary dimensions and beauty, which are perfectly sound; while the fantastic forms and umbrageous tops of others, with their hearts quite decayed, read many a moral and impressive lesson, which the mind of sensibility may easily apply. Often is the heart of man corroded with care or broken by neglect, while the forced smile of joy, called up by honest pride, plays on the face; and externals indicate nothing but happiness, and vigour within. The GENEROUS SPIRIT, like the majestic king of the forest, towers unbending to the last; and perhaps when the irresistible storms, by which it has been long buffeted, occasion its fall, the unavailing tear of regret may be shed too late, and the hand that might have been a stay, be extended in vain!

The usual RIDE round the park, for occasional visitors, includes a circumference of rather more than three miles, describing a wide circle round the PALACE and GARDENS, which are casually and advantageously seen through glades in the progress, and exhibiting many magnificent pictures over the park and country round. This RIDE has ever been considered as the first of natural charms that BLENHEIM supplies, and as the *coup d'œil* and compendium of all the rest; and as it may be taken in a carriage or on horseback, it is neither accompanied with fatigue nor delay.

In this delightful tour, we pass from scenes the most adorned, to open grove*, and even to the wild majesty of a native forest, with no abrupt or unpleasing transition. Glades, lawns, gentle hills, retiring vales, wood and water, so sweetly blend and harmonize in the landscape, that the eye every where finds novelty and interest, and acknowledges the effect of contrast and design, without revolting at its display. But to enumerate every beauty conspicuous in this tour, would be to delineate all that is charming in natural objects; and in some instances would occasion a

* It is said that the trees to the eastward of Blenheim, which now form an open grove, were originally planted in battalia, and of this there are still many evident traces; but the axe has long since judiciously broken their ranks, and restored them to taste and nature.

repetition of circumstances already remarked. A detail must not therefore be expected. Let it however be observed, that at Blenheim the *ferme ornée* is combined with the magnificent park. In one quarter, the eye is delighted with the sight of waving corn, in another, with green paddocks that invite the scythe: here a building dedicated to agricultural purposes, or raised for the accommodation of the necessary officers, just peeps through the deep shade of surrounding trees; there the team rattles down the slope abrupt. On one side appears a herd of deer, on another a flock of sheep; and sometimes animals, native and foreign, graze in social peace. All is a picture of rural life in its most agreeable colours, in its happiest avocations: it presents cheerful activity, or tranquil repose—Arcadian scenes divested of fable, and real wealth without glitter.

The PHEASANTRY, situated on a rising ground near the lower cascade, in the parish of BLADON, is one of the most superb establishments of the kind in this country. The variety and beauty of these birds present an object that cannot fail to please. But though some of the more curious kinds are kept here, and in the AVIARY, they stock the park and the adjoining woods in prodigious numbers. In the beautifully disposed woods, called BURLEY, in the same vicinity and

parish, there is another regular establishment for their protection. The situation is romantic, the accompaniments in the first style of rural embellishment, and finely assimilated with the park, of which the whole extent appears as a continuation, and from its elevation presents some delightfully varied views.

Among the many captivating views which every spectator of taste will recognize in the tour of the PARK, those from the HIGH LODGE and the OBELISK may be particularized. The HIGH LODGE was once the residence of the witty, but immoral Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, and the place where he died. Let those who have copied his profligacy, reflect on his remorse, and resolve to imitate his repentance! From hence, the prospect is not only very extensive, but is also one of the most attractive that can be conceived; it includes, among a variety of other capital and picturesque objects, a distant view of the University of OXFORD in one direction, and of a richly wooded Country, in which WHICHWOOD FOREST bounds the landscape in another.

Enchanting site! Hence every rural sweet,
And every natural charm delight to meet.
Hence to the eye the landscape opens wide,
The dancing spirits roll a quicker tide.
Around, new objects prompt th' excursive lay;
The gently winding stream, the meadow gay;

The smiling village, sunk in leafy shades,
That just unfolds its low roof through the glades;
The splendid seat, the tower, the shining spire,
And hills that catch the sun's departing fire.
The SYLVAN SCENE, where erst in happier days,
To NATURE's charms I pour'd the heart-felt lays*.
OXONIA's fanes, of every Art the seat,
Of every muse the lov'd, the blest retreat.

O may fair science in her precincts smile,
And shed new lustre o'er this happy isle:
To guard the laws, religion's flame maintain,
Still may worth issue from her fost'ring reign.

The HIGH LODGE occupying the greatest elevation in the park, its whole vicinity is replete with beauties. The drive through the forest wood, which lies between it and the lake, presents such an assemblage of views, and such various combinations of them in rapid succession, that no stranger should omit taking this route. The Water, the Palace, the Gardens, the Grand Bridge, the Pillar, Woodstock, and other near and remote objects, open and shut upon the eye like enchantment; and at one point, every change of a few paces furnishes a new scene, each of which would form a subject worthy of the sublimest pencil.

Viewed from the OBELISK or PILLAR, at once the Palace, the River, and the Gardens, are seen in their best perspective, and the idea of grandeur

* See Ode to Nature, written in Whichwood Forest.

they excite will convert admiration into rapture. Nor will the OBELISK itself pass without observation : it is raised to the memory of the hero of the last century, with whose transcendent services, the exploits of a WELLINGTON can alone be compared in this.

Immortal Chief ! of Albion's isle the pride,
By martial deeds to greatest names allied :
Renown'd for valor, as for mercy lov'd,
The highest pitch of human bliss you prov'd ;
Gain'd the fair meed without the conscious stain,
And wore the laurel, unalloy'd with pain.
Unlike those pests who fight for fame alone,
To slave a nation, or to mount a throne ;
You drew the sword, the injur'd to defend,
To aid the helpless, and the proud to bend.
Be this your fame !—nor could the favouring Nine
Grace with a praise, more noble, more divine.

The statue of this great man, which crowns the column, is designed in a Roman dress : at his feet are two eagles : in the left hand is the general's bâton ; in the right, a figure of VICTORY elevated. On three sides of the pedestal are inscribed the Acts of the British Parliament in his favour, and the entail of his honours and estates on the descendants of his daughters ; and hence, issue failing in Lady Godolphin, the eldest ; from the Countess of Sunderland, the second daughter, they now centre in the Spencer family. On the side facing Blenheim, his character is thus

delineated, and his exploits recorded, as is supposed, by the masterly pen of Lord Bolingbroke :

The Castle of **BLLENHEIM** was founded by **Queen ANNE**

In the fourth year of her Reign,

In the year of the Christian *Æra*

One Thousand Seven Hundred and Five.

A monument design'd to perpetuate the Memory of the
Signal Victory

Obtain'd over the *French* and *Bavarians*,

Near the Village of **BLLENHEIM**,

On the Banks of the *Danube*,

By **JOHN DUKE** of **MARLBOROUGH**,

The Hero not only of his Nation, but of his Age :

Whose Glory was equal in the Council and in the Field ;

Who, by Wisdom, Justice, Candour, and Address,

Reconcil'd various, and even opposite Interests ;

Acquired an Influence

Which no Rank, no Authority can give,

Nor any Force, but that of superior Virtue ;

Became the fixed important Centre,

Which united, in one common Cause,

The principal States of **EUROPE** ;

Who, by military Knowledge, and irresistible Valour,

In a long Series of uninterrupted Triumphs,

Broke the Power of France,

When raised the highest, when exerted the most :

Rescued the Empire from Desolation ;

Asserted and confirmed the Liberties of **EUROPE**.

“ **PHILIP**, a Grandson of the House of
“ **FRANCE**, united to the Interest, directed by
“ the Policy, supported by the Arms of that
“ Crown, was placed on the Throne of Spain.

“ King WILLIAM III. beheld this formidable
“ Union of two Great, and once Rival Monarchies.
“ At the end of a Life spent in defending the
“ Liberties of EUROPE, He saw them in their
“ greatest Danger. He provided for their se-
“ curity in the most effectual manner. He took
“ the Duke of Marlborough into his Service.

“ Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary

“ To the States General of the United Provinces,

“ The Duke contracted several Alliances, before
“ the Death of King William. He confirmed
“ and improved These, He contracted others,
“ after the Accession of Queen ANNE: and re-
“ united the Confederacy, which had been dis-
“ solved at the End of a former War, in a stricter
“ and firmer League.

“ Captain General and Commander in Chief

“ Of the Forces of Great Britain,

“ The Duke led to the Field the Army of the
“ Allies. He took with surprising rapidity VEN-
“ LO, RUREMONDE, STEVENSWAERT,
“ LIEGE. He extended and secured the Fron-
“ tiers of the Dutch. The Enemies, whom he
“ found insulting at the Gates of NIMEGHEN,
“ were driven to seek for shelter behind their
“ Lines. He forced BONNE, HUY, LIM-
“ BOURG, in another Campaign. He opened

“ the Communication of the RHINE, as well as
“ the MAES. He added all the Country between
“ these Rivers to his former Conquests.

“ The Arms of FRANCE, favoured by the
“ Defection of the Elector of BAVARIA, had
“ penetrated into the Heart of the EMPIRE.
“ This mighty Body lay exposed to immediate
“ ruin. In that memorable Crisis, the Duke of
“ MARLBOROUGH led his Troops, with un-
“ exampled Celerity, Secrecy, Order, from the
“ OCEAN to the DANUBE. He saw, He at-
“ tacked, nor stopped, but to conquer the Enemy.
“ He forced the BAVARIANS, sustained by the
“ FRENCH, in their strong Intrenchments at
“ SCHELLENBERG. He passed the DANUBE.
“ A second Royal Army, composed of the best
“ Troops of FRANCE, was sent to reinforce the
“ first. That of the Confederates was divided.
“ With one part of it the Siege of INGOL-
“ STADT was carried on: with the other, the
“ Duke gave Battle to the united strength of
“ FRANCE and BAVARIA. On the second
“ day of August, one thousand seven hundred
“ and four, He gained a more glorious Victory
“ than the Histories of any Age can boast. The
“ heaps of slain were dreadful Proofs of his
“ Valour: A Marshal of FRANCE, whole Le-
“ gions of FRENCH, his Prisoners, proclaimed
“ his Mercy. BAVARIA was subdued, RA-

“TISBON, AUSBOURG, ULM, MEMIN-
“GHEN, all the Usurpations of the Enemy
“were restored. From the DANUBE the Duke
“turned his victorious Arms towards the RHINE,
“and the MOSELLE, LANDAU, TREVES,
“TRAERBACH were taken. In the course of
“one Campaign the very Nature of the War
“was changed. The Invaders of other States
“were reduced to defend their own. The Fron-
“tier of FRANCE was exposed in its weakest
“Part to the Efforts of the Allies.

“That he might improve this Advantage,
“that He might push the Sum of Things to a
“speedy Decision, the Duke of MARLBO-
“ROUGH led his Troops early in the following
“Year once more to the MOSELLE. They
“whom He had saved a few months before, neg-
“lected to second him now. They who might
“have been his Companions in Conquest, refused
“to join him. When He saw the generous De-
“signs He had formed frustrated by private
“Interest, by Pique, by Jealousy, He returned
“with Speed to the MAES. He returned, and
“Fortune and Victory returned with Him.
“LIEGE was relieved: HUY retaken. The
“FRENCH, who had pressed the Army of the
“STATES GENERAL with superior Numbers,
“retired behind Intrenchments which they
“deemed impregnable. The Duke forced these

“Intrenchments with inconsiderable loss, on
“the seventh Day of July, 1705. He de-
“feated a great Part of the Army which defended
“them. The rest escaped by a precipitate Re-
“treat. If Advantages proportionable to this
“Success were not immediately obtained, let the
“Failure be ascribed to that Misfortune which
“attends most Confederacies, a Division of Opi-
“nions where one alone should judge, a Division
“of Powers where one alone should command.
“The Disappointment itself did Honour to the
“Duke. It became the Wonder of Mankind,
“how he could do so much under those Re-
“straints which had hindered him from doing
“more.

“Powers more absolute were given him after-
“wards. The Increase of his Powers multiplied
“his Victories. At the opening of the next
“Campaign, when all his Army was not yet as-
“sembled, when it was hardly known that he had
“taken the Field, the Noise of his Triumphs
“was heard over EUROPE. On the twelfth
“day of May, one thousand seven hundred and
“six, he attacked the French at RAMILLIES.
“In the space of two Hours their whole Army
“was put to Flight. The Vigour and Conduct
“with which he improved the Success were
“equal to those with which he gained it.—
“LOUVAIN, BRUSSELS, MALINES, LIERE,

“ GHENT, OUDENARDE, ANTWERP,
“ DAMME, BRUGES, COURTRAY surren-
“ dered. OSTEND, MENIN, DENDERMOND,
“ AETH, were taken. BRABANT and FLAN-
“ DERS were recovered. Places which had re-
“ sisted the greatest Generals for Months, for
“ Years; Provinces disputed for Ages, were the
“ Conquests of a Summer.

“ Nor was the Duke content to Triumph alone.
“ Solicitous for the general Interest, his Care
“ extended to the remotest scenes of the War,
“ He chose to lessen his own Army, that he
“ might enable the Leaders of other Armies to
“ conquer. To this must be ascribed, that
“ TURIN was relieved, the Duke of Savoy re-
“ instated, the FRENCH driven with Confusion
“ out of ITALY.

“ These Victories gave the Confederates an
“ Opportunity of carrying the War on every
“ side into the Dominions of FRANCE. But
“ she continued to enjoy a Kind of peaceful
“ Neutrality in GERMANY. From ITALY she
“ was once alarmed, and had no more to fear.
“ The entire Reduction of this Power, whose
“ Ambition had caused, whose strength sup-
“ ported the War, seemed reserved to him alone,
“ who had so triumphantly begun the glorious
“ Work.

“ The Barrier of FRANCE on the side of the

“LOW COUNTRIES, had been forming for
“more than half a Century. What Art, Power,
“Expense could do, had been done, to render
“it impenetrable. Yet here she was most ex-
“posed: for here the Duke of MARLBOROUGH
“threatened to attack her.

“To cover what they had gained by Surprise,
“or had been yielded to them by Treachery,
“the FRENCH marched to the Banks of the
“SCHELDE. At their Head were the Princes
“of the Blood, and their most fortunate General
“the Duke of VENDOME. Thus commanded,
“thus posted, they hoped to check the Victor
“in his Course. Vain were their Hopes. The
“Duke of MARLBOROUGH passed the River
“in their Sight. He defeated their whole Army.
“The Approach of Night concealed, the Proxi-
“mity of GHENT favoured their Flight. They
“neglected nothing to repair their Loss, to de-
“fend their Frontier. New Generals, new
“Armies appeared in the NETHERLANDS.
“All contributed to enhance the Glory, none
“were able to retard the Progress of the Confe-
“derate Armies.

“LISLE, the Bulwark of this Barrier was be-
“sieged. A numerous Garrison, and a Marshal
“of FRANCE defended the Place. Prince
“EUGENE of SAVOY commanded, the Duke
“of MARLBOROUGH covered and sustained

“ the Siege. The Rivers were seized, and the
“ communication with HOLLAND interrupted.
“ The Duke opened new Communications with
“ great Labour and greater Art. Through
“ Countries over-run by the Enemy, the neces-
“ sary Convoys arrived in Safety. One alone
“ was attacked. The Troops which attacked it
“ were beat. The Defence of LISLE was ani-
“ mated by assurances of Relief. The FRENCH
“ assembled all their Force. They marched to-
“ wards the Town. The Duke of MARLBO-
“ ROUGH offered them battle, without sus-
“ pending the Siege. They abandoned the En-
“ terprize. They came to save the Town: They
“ were Spectators of its Fall.

“ From this Conquest the Duke hastened to
“ others.

“ The Posts taken by the Enemy on the
“ SCHELDE were surprised. That River was
“ passed the second Time, and, notwithstanding
“ the great Preparations made to prevent it,
“ without opposition. BRUSSELS, besieged
“ by the Elector of BAVARIA, was relieved.
“ GHENT surrendered to the Duke in the middle
“ of a Winter remarkably severe. An Army,
“ little inferior to his own, marched out of the
“ Place.

“ As soon as the Season of the Year permitted
“ him to open another Campaign, the Duke be-

“ sieged and took **TOURNAY**. He invested
“ **MONS**. Near this City, the French Army,
“ covered by thick Woods, defended by treble
“ Intrenchments, waited to molest, nor pre-
“ sumed to offer Battle. Even this was not at-
“ tempted by them with Impunity. On the last
“ day of August, one thousand seven hundred
“ and nine, the Duke attacked them in their
“ Camp. All was employed, nothing availed
“ against the Resolution of such a General,
“ against the Fury of such Troops. The Battle
“ was Bloody : the Event decisive. The Woods
“ were pierced : the Fortifications trampled
“ down. The Enemy fled. The Town was taken.
“ **DOWAY, BETHUNE, AIRE, ST. VE-**
“ **NANT, BOUCHAIN**, underwent the same
“ fate in two succeeding Years. Their vigorous
“ Resistance could not save them. The Army of
“ **FRANCE** durst not attempt to relieve them.
“ It seemed preserved to defend the Capital of
“ the Monarchy.

“ The Prospect of this extreme Distress was
“ neither distant nor dubious. The **FRENCH**
“ acknowledged their Conqueror, and sued for
“ Peace.

“ These are the Actions of the Duke of **MARLBOROUGH**,
Performed in the compass of a few Years,
Sufficient to adorn the Annals of Ages.
The Admiration of other Nations
Will be conveyed to latest Posterity,

In the Histories even of the Enemies of BRITAIN.

The Sense which the BRITISH Nation had

Of his transcendent Merit

was expressed

In the most solemn, most effectual, most durable manner.

The Acts of PARLIAMENT inscribed on this Pillar

Shall stand as long as the BRITISH Name and Language

last,

Illustrious monuments

Of MARLBOROUGH's Glory,

and

Of BRITAIN's Gratitude."

Rows of stately trees describe an open square on the east and west of this column: but soon converging behind to a moderate breadth, and breaking into groups and clumps of different forms and magnitudes, they form a charming vista to an almost undetermined length. Through this vista formerly lay the road conducting to the grand approach; a straight reach of more than two miles, without much diversity in the objects, and with too great formality to please. It now takes a happier direction along the edge of the lake to QUEEN POOL, then enters a low bottom with noble steeps in distinct masses, the sides of which are adorned with pendent groves and clumps of different growths; and slowly gaining the level, at last terminates in the parallel of the palace and pillar; reaching the same point with the undeviating vista, which in its present application is a real embellishment.

The ancient Roman road, generally known by the appellation of AKEMAN-STREET, crosses this vista from east to west; and may be distinctly traced near the North Lodge. Where the AKEMAN has been broken up, which, as lovers of antiquity, we lament has been done where it could not be necessary, its materials appear to have been an immense congestion of rubble and stones, such as the vicinity supplied. Its ridge, however, in many places is still entire, and exhibits a proof of the persevering industry, the indefatigable pains, and the public spirit of the Roman Colonists. At a small distance beyond the park, a little to the right of the AKEMAN, in the parish of STONESFIELD, and in a spot called *Chest-Hill* Acre, probably from *Castrum*, a tessellated pavement* was discovered in 1711, which was then generally supposed to be nothing more than the site of a Roman general's tent.

In 1779, near the same spot, the areas of several other large apartments were found with curious tessellations, and borders, at once admirable for beauty and device. Adjoining was a hypocaust, and a bath, and other remains of Roman architecture in brick, of the most durable texture. These have long been removed or demolished; but correct drawings of the whole, by Lewing-

* See Hearne, Pointer, Pitiscus' Lexicon, and the 2d Vol. of the Supplement to Montfaucon's Antiquities, p. 39.

ton, of Woodstock, (who saved copies,) are in the possession of the Antiquary Society*. The two largest apartments are very accurately and beautifully represented in a late engraving by that ingenious self-taught artist, Fowler.

But this park is still more celebrated for its magnificent royal palace, commonly called the **MANOR HOUSE**, the frequent and favourite retreat of several kings of England, at various periods, till the reign of Charles I. when it stood a long siege under the conduct of Captain Samuel Fawcet, who behaved with such skill and resolution on behalf of his royal master, that many of the enemy fell before the place; and had not the king sent commissioners to treat about a surrender, which was at last agreed on, April 26, 1646, this intrepid officer was determined to bury himself under its ruins. Some of the intrenchments cast up on this occasion are still visible on

* On the late inclosure of the parish of Stonesfield (1801,) by a *tasteless* allotment of property, the site of these venerable remains of the Romans, has been divided among three different proprietors, so that not a vestige of them will soon be left. While the field was inclosing, the writer of this saw a very beautiful border of one of the tessellated areas, uncovered. It lay only about six inches from the surface, and must have been grazed by the plough, every year that the spot was in cultivation. Coins, chiefly of the later Roman Emperors, are still occasionally found in the vicinity, and probably other remains of antiquity may still be discovered.

the brow of the hill above QUEEN POOL; and the parterres and knots of the ancient gardens are distinctly to be traced on the lawn, in front of Churchill's Pillar.

Some venerable and majestic remains of the manor house were to be seen till after the building of Blenheim*; when every trace of the ancient edifice was removed, and two SYCAMORE TREES were planted to mark its site.

Where yon spread trees wave o'er the crystal stream,
And shew inverted by the solar beam;
There where the margin's daisy-mantled side
Shelves down to kiss the congregated tide,
An ancient palace stood,—the lov'd retreat
Of Britain's Monarchs from the toils of state;
Where, dropt the weight of diademic power,
The King, in private, spent the tranquil hour;
New schemes contriv'd, or ponder'd on the past,
Nor felt time slowly lag, nor fly too fast.

On entering the park from Woodstock, these present themselves on a bold elevation beyond the river, at a small distance from the bridge: their growth is luxuriant; their foliage of the

* On levelling the site of the old manor house, 1723, a coffin was dug up, in which was found a gold ring, of about ten or twelve guineas value, inscribed with these words, "*Remember the Covenant.*"

LELAND's Coll. by Hearne.

From prints and drawings still remaining, it appears that the palace of Woodstock was a magnificent and extensive structure.

most vivid green; they spread their broad arms on every side, and seem to guard the spot with religious veneration. Though their appearance is cheerful, though the pensive has no share in the picture; a philosophic mind can scarcely view them, without impressions more strong than the most splendid ruin could have excited. At the sight of a ruin, it is natural to indulge reflection on past scenes, to recal images of ancient grandeur, and to connect what remains with what is lost. Here we cannot connect, but we may create.—Fancy is at liberty to raise the pile, to fashion its ornaments, and to adapt its appendages, without a guide, and without controul; and fancy will ever exceed realities.—We thus erect the visionary palace; we people it with the gay, the illustrious, and the good;—we listen to the voice of melody—we pourtray the sprightly dance, the proud levee;—at once they vanish; and we awake to the recollection of the vanity of art, and the ravages of time, which here shew their completest triumph. Of the regal dome, not a wreck remains; and where kings gave audience, and vassals knelt, the herds crop the velvet green*.

* On moving the ground in the vicinity, in 1791, several natural and artificial curiosities were discovered; among the rest, some coins of the Roman Emperors. Might not a Roman villa have originally occupied the spot? The situation was worthy of that distinction, and probably enjoyed it.

Campos ubi Troja fuit.—

Oblivion broods upon the levell'd lawn,
And fly the tints by history's pencil drawn.
The turf-grown palace shews no antique tower
Nor wail the loves in Rosamonda's Bower.

This place can boast a very remote antiquity. History informs us, that King Ethelred, who began his reign in 866, held a parliament at Woodstock palace; and Lambard, in his Collection of Saxon Laws, recites several statutes then and there enacted. His brother, the illustrious ALFRED, who mounted the throne in 872, not only occasionally resided at Woodstock, but, according to a MS. in the Cottonian library, spent so much of the little space here, in which he was disengaged from his numerous wars, that he translated *Boethius de Consolatione Philosophiæ*; and about the same time he is supposed to have founded the University of Oxford, or rather to have restored it.

Here sacred ALFRED, victor of his foes,
Indulg'd a studious, and a mild repose;
Undrew the veil that wrapp'd the moral page,
And sooth'd by classic arts a barbarous age!
Bade science bloom with renovated grace,
And clasp the Muses in a close embrace.

Camden, in his Britannia, says, that King Ethelred, father of Edward the Confessor, “Apud Woodstock olim ordinum conventum habuit, et

leges tulit;" that is, held a convention of the states at Woodstock, and passed laws. And from the censual roll, or survey made in the 18th year of William the Conqueror, commonly called Domesday Book, it appears that Woodstock was then a borough, and that the demesnes were afforested. Rous, the historian, tells us, that this was the first park in England: in point of natural beauty and elegant embellishments, it still maintains priority! Dugdale seems to be of Rous's opinion; and William of Malmesbury, and others, inform us, that King Henry I. furnished it with foreign wild beasts, which he procured from other princes, or bought up at a great expense. Certain it is, that this monarch at least beautified the palace, and surrounded the park with a wall, which in many places still remains; whether he built them from the ground, is by no means so clear*.

At the mention of Woodstock, the name of

* Not only the park, but the town of Woodstock was made by Henry I. And indeed the town soon flourished on account of the famous park.—LELAND'S Collect.

In an original document, however, of the reign of Edward the First, relative to Woodstock, and appended to Hearne's History of Robert of Avesbury, the foundation of New Woodstock, is ascribed to Henry II. Be this as it may, its origin, as its name implies, is much less remote than that of Old Woodstock, which is still one of the demesne towns, and has vestiges remaining of its former greater extent.

Henry II. naturally occurs : for who has not heard of HENRY and ROSAMOND ! This celebrated beauty was daughter of Walter Lord Clifford. At the early age of fifteen she possessed sufficient charms to captivate a warrior king, who seduced her from her friends, and erected a BOWER for her reception, and a labyrinth by which her romantic retreat might communicate with the palace, and prevent any surprisal from the vindictive jealousy of his Queen.

This precaution, however, is said to have proved ineffectual, and that the lovely frail one at length fell a victim to the resentment of the injured and implacable Eleanor.

Ill-fated-fair ! by HENRY led astray,
And taught to tread Seduction's thorny way ;
Lur'd from parental arms, ere prudence' call
Fix'd Virtue's wish, or pictur'd Vice's fall ;
Immur'd by Love in solitary bowers,
And doom'd to wither like the desert flowers !

The manner of her discovery, and the nature of her death, are variously related, and much disputed ; and authentic history does not furnish us with a clue to unravel them. It is probable however, that she fell the victim of disease, and that the legend of her being poisoned by Eleanor has no foundation in truth. Rosamond was buried in the choir of Godstow nunnery, near Oxford, where a magnificent tomb was erected to her

memory*, surrounded with tapers continually burning; till the beginning of King Richard's reign, when Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, in his primary visitation, coming to Godstow; and being offended at the extraordinary veneration he saw paid to a woman of her unfortunate description, burst into a fit of zeal, and ordered her remains to be removed, and deposited in a less sacred place. His injunction was complied with; and the nuns interred her in their chapter-house, covering her grave with a flat stone, on which was inscribed no more than TOMBA ROSAMUNDI. What is now shewn for Rosamond's tomb, and some miserable verses recorded as her epitaph, are only inventions to amuse the credulous, and baits for the ignorant: at the dissolution of the monastery more important objects were obliterated, more singular circumstances consigned to oblivion.

Curiosity will be eager to be gratified with an account of her bower, her labyrinth, and her

* See notices of Rosamond's Tomb in the Gentleman's Magazine, for November, 1791, p. 985; and of the foundation of Godstow, in the same work for August, 1787, p. 676. It stands in a low meadow between Wolvercot and Wytham, surrounded by different branches of the Isis. What is called the *Chapel*, now serves for cattle to take shelter in. A few of the bounding walls, and some ancient arches, are the only other remains of this once celebrated nunnery; and some of these have very lately been demolished for the sake of the materials!

bath; circumstances so universally known by report, and so intimately connected with the scenes described. Of the bower, there is neither authentic history, nor drawing extant*—of the labyrinth, some traces of its foundation were discovered, and various utensils, coins, and antiquities dug up, and presented to Lady Diana Spencer by the workmen, when the ground was levelling by order of the first Duke of Marlborough.

The spring that must have supplied her bath retains her name; and truly is

“Health to the sick, and solace to the swain.”

It is situated in a small dell in the side of the hill, a little to the westward of the grand bridge, and a few paces from the edge of the lake. It gushes from an artificial aperture, in the stones which line the cavity on the north to a considerable elevation, with a fall of nearly two feet, and a copiousness and equability in every season, that few springs exceed. Scarcely has it smoothed its ruffled wave before it is received into a capacious bath, about five feet deep, and twenty square, lined at the bottom and on the sides with free-stone, and fenced with iron pallisades. The

* In Antony à Wood's Study, W. 276, there is however, a description of Rosamond's bower, and Woodstock park, supposed to be written by Mr. Aubrey.

water of the bath is so pellucid and tranquil, that it reflects objects like a mirror; and for this purpose poets and lovers have assigned it to beauty, which seems to be indigenous here.

The facing over the fall is formed of a dusky coloured stone; the layers terminate abruptly on the sides with the resemblance of a ruin; and the whole has the air of antiquity. To increase this appearance, it bears many marks of the universal passion—THE LOVE OF FAME. This has prompted numbers to carve the initials of their names, and the year of their exploit, with characteristic rudeness, and with a seeming zeal for their preservation. In one part we see names which now, perhaps, have no other memorial; in another, recent efforts to impress a remembrance, by obliterating what former engravers have left as monuments of their existence. Thus it is in life: in the most important transactions, in the greatest performances!

In a solitude like this, where the subject and the scene are apt to inspire pensive thoughts, such traces are not displeasing: they tend to promote one general effect, to which every circumstance here contributes—the love of contemplation. The hawthorn, mixed with woodbines and other shrubs, overhangs the spring, and forms a deep irregular shade; the gadding ivy and its congenerous plants clasp the stones that line the

precipice, and fill up the fissures and interstices with their roots. Behind rises a grove, which is rapidly thickening its gloom, and assisting to render the spot more sequestered. The birds carol around; the nightingale, perhaps, pours forth her plaintive notes; and the dashing of the water, unites with the reverberations of the neighbouring echo, to cherish a soothing melancholy. When this mood has been indulged till relief becomes desirable, we may turn to the palace. The aspect on this hand is more cheerful and open. The sombre, however, still prevails, particularly at even; it is inseparable from the season and the spot. The following inscription was penned under its influence, on a report that an URN was intended to be erected over the spring: if the verse should be neglected, let the moral be remembered!

INSCRIPTION.

Ye Fair! who tread in Pleasure's mazy Round,
Where many a Snare, and many a Gulph is found;
For once reflect! with pensive Step draw nigh,
And let this Moral fix Attention's eye:
" Birth, Titles, Fortune,—all that Fate can give,
" Or the most favour'd of your sex receive;
" Youth's blooming Grace, ev'n ROSAMONDA's charms,
" All that delights, or captivates and warms,
" Weigh'd in the scale 'gainst Virtue, are but vain—
" Link'd with fair Virtue, deathless Wreaths obtain;
" While Vice lives only in the Roll of Fame,
" To wake your Pity, or to warn from Shame."

At Woodstock Palace, Henry II. received the homage of Malcolm, King of Scotland, and Rice, Prince of Wales, in 1164 ; and likewise conferred the honour of knighthood on Jeffrey, surnamed Plantagenet, his second son by the fair Rosamond. The nuptials of the Lady Ermengard, daughter of Richard Viscount Beaumont, cousin to Henry, with WILLIAM King of Scotland, were also celebrated here with the utmost magnificence, for four successive days. They were married in Woodstock Chapel.

In 1275, Edward I. called a parliament at this place, and here Edmund, his second son was born, from thence called Edmund of Woodstock ; as well as EDWARD, eldest son of Edward III. commonly known by the appellation of the Black Prince, whose early valour, and brilliant exploits, joined to the most polished and conciliating manners, endear his memory to every lover of his country. This gallant prince, who died at the age of forty-six, is said once to have resided at the mansion, now known by the name of Old Woodstock House, belonging to Balliol College, and long the residence of the writer of this.

ILLUSTRIOUS EDWARD ! on thy natal hour
With partial aspects shone each heavenly pow'r ;
PEACE from her olive throne triumphant sung,
And fierce BELLONA many a Pæan rung ;
The gentle Arts with approbation smil'd,
And War's wild offspring hail'd their favourite child.

O! fitted, or to shine in martial pride,
When hostile legions press on every side;
Or give to Science all her native charms,
And conquer MINDS, by Reason's nobler arms!
Fain would the Muse a lasting wreath entwine,
To deck with vivid bloom thy brow divine:
Fain would she sing of POICTIERS' tented field,
And with the Lily grace thy sable shield;
But NATURE's charms recal her wild career,
And fix her, ardent, to a meeter sphere!

Woodstock is likewise the birth-place of THOMAS, the sixth son of Edward III. surnamed in history from the site of his nativity.

To enumerate all the remarkable incidents relative to Woodstock Park, would be to compose a large volume *. It was long the scene of regal pomp and festivity, and productive of various interesting events, many of which are, no doubt, carried down the stream of time, and forgotten.

Here Henry III. in 1238, narrowly escaped assassination, by a person named Ribbaud, who suffered for his meditated treason; here John Hastings, Earl of Pembroke, was slain, at a Christmas festivity, in the reign of Richard II.

* The author of this Description has for several years been making COLLECTIONS for a HISTORY of WOODSTOCK. Whether it will ever appear before the public, must depend on health and other favourable circumstances; but he most respectfully solicits from Antiquaries and others, such information as may forward his design.

and here an attempt was made on the life of Henry VIII. by William Morisco.

CHAUCER, the father of English poetry, spent some of his happiest hours at this place; it even contends for the honor of his birth, and unquestionably he has made it classic ground. The park was the scene of his favourite wanderings; and many of the rural descriptions in his poems are borrowed from thence. In his poem of the *Cuckoo* and the *Nightingale*, we may trace his morning walk from his own house down the vale, through which the Glyme used to wind within its narrow banks, before it was expanded by art. In his *Dream*, too, he describes the Bower, as a white castle, with its sylvan accompaniments of maples. If we make allowance for the rust of age, and the obsolete modes of diction that now obscure his works, no one has ever equalled him in the various walks of poetry he adopted.

Chaucer's house was situated at the right angle of the area before the triumphal gate, which has been previously mentioned: the site is at present the property of Mr. Prior; and though few remains of antiquity are now to be traced, the traveller of taste never fails to eye the spot with a fond enthusiasm: he venerates the residence of original genius, and blames that spirit of improvement which has obliterated vestiges, that ought to have been deemed sacred by every

Briton. Several writers of reputation mention a huge folio volume of his works in MS. chained to a reading desk in his house, and which is said to have been extant in the beginning of the last century, or the end of the preceding: that it once existed we have no doubt; but the precise time when it disappeared, and what has become of it, are totally unknown.

AKENSIDE'S inscription for a statue of the ancient bard, though his memory does not stand in need of such frail memorials, nor is likely to obtain them, will not be improperly subjoined, nor appear inapplicable to the purpose for which it was intended.

Such was old CHAUCER, such the placid mien
Of him who first with harmony inform'd
The language of our Fathers. Here he dwelt
For many a cheerful day. These ancient walls
Have often heard him while his legends blithe
He sang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each estate and age
The fashions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand pourtraying. Tho' perchance
From BLENHEIM'S towers, O stranger thou art come
Glowing with CHURCHILL'S trophies, yet in vain
Dost thou applaud them, if thy breast be cold
To him, this other hero, who in times
Dark and untaught, began with charming verse
To tame the rudeness of his native land.

With regard to the former celebrity of this place, we cannot forbear adding, that the Princess

ELIZABETH was confined in the Manor House, by her cruel sister, Queen Mary, under the care of Sir Henry Beddingfield: and that her life was once in the most imminent danger, from a fire that broke out under the room where she slept: but whether this fire was kindled intentionally, or merely through accident, remains among the number of undeveloped mysteries with which the path of antiquity is strewn.

Yet cannot birth, or fortune's powerful claim,
Beauty's fair form, or virtue's heavenly flame,
From life's fell cares their lov'd possessors free,
Else, why, ELIZA, frown'd the fates on thee?
Why dropp'd the tear, as from the lattice seen,
The rural maiden, singing, cross'd the green?
But that you felt the crime of being great,
And grac'd a prison, ere you rul'd a state!

While here, she is reported to have shed tears on seeing a milk-maid, singing, pass before the window of her prison, and to have expressed a wish that she had been born to a situation as humble and as happy; a circumstance on which the elegant and plaintive Shenstone has beautifully enlarged.

Hark to yonder milk-maid singing
Cheerly o'er the brimming pail;
Cowslips all around her springing,
Sweetly paint the golden vale.

Never yet did courtly maiden
Move so sprightly, look so fair,
Never breast with jewels laden
Pour a song so void of care.

Would indulgent heaven had granted
Me some rural damsel's part!
All the empire I had wanted
Then had been my Shepherd's heart.

The following verses were written with charcoal on the window-shutter of the room where she was confined. They are the composition of a great Queen, and derive their chief merit from this peculiarity.

Oh, Fortune! how thy restless wavering state
Hath fraught with cares my troubled witt,
Witness this present prison whither Fate
Could bear me, and the joys I quit.
Thou causedst the guiltie to be losed
From bandes wherein are innocents inclosed;
Causing the guiltles to be straites reserved,
And freeing those that death well deserved;
But by her malice can be nothing wroughte;
So God send to my foes all they have thoughte.

ELIZABETHE PRISONER.

Anno Dom. 1555.

During the time of the civil wars, the Palace, as has been previously mentioned, suffered irreparable damage, by a resolute siege it sustained; but was still farther injured by the mercenary and rapacious disposition of the usurper and his

dependants, by whom part of the very materials were exposed to sale in 1653 *. The commissioners who assembled here in 1649, by order of the Rump Parliament, to survey the royal property, and who had taken up their residence in the king's apartments, were terribly alarmed by supposed spirits, which incessantly disturbed their repose, during their stay: but the real actor in this farce, was one Joe Collins, since called the Merry Devil of Woodstock, though at that time dignified with the epithet of Just. This man, it seems, was a royalist, and anxious to impress the commissioners with an idea of supernatural agency against their proceedings; and perhaps their own consciences aided the imposture.

A circumstance of this kind would have been deemed unworthy regard, had it not been to introduce a remark on the triumph of true philosophy, and the decline of superstition. A learned professor in the University, in the reign of Charles II. fills several pages of his book on the Natural History of Oxfordshire, with a detail of the pranks of this imaginary demon, among other reveries as ridiculous, which at this period would

* It appears that Lieutenant-General Fleetwood obtained a grant of the Manor House and its appurtenances, which he sold for 1000 pounds. Several pictures from the Collection here are still dispersed in the neighbourhood. The taste of Charles I. is universally acknowledged.

disgrace the belief of anility: Mr. Widdowes, likewise, who was then minister of Woodstock, kept a Diary, in which the story of the apparitions is related. This silly work was published in 1660, and with it a short survey of Woodstock, taken from ancient authors.

A few abridged EXTRACTS from the ancient CUSTOMS of the MANOR of WOODSTOCK, taken in the reign of Edward VI. will still farther gratify curiosity, from their intimate connection with the subject of this manual.

To the manor and honour of Woodstock belong seven demesne towns or villages, HORDLEY, WOOTTON, COMBE, STONESFIELD, HANDBOROUGH, BLADON, and Old WOODSTOCK, the tenants of which are discharged from tolls in all fairs and markets, and possess other peculiar privileges.

There are three several kinds of land in this manor, DEMESNE, or BURY LAND, FREE LAND, and CUSTOMARY LAND, the latter of which descends to the youngest son or daughter, as heir.

The free tenants and customary tenants in the demesne towns have interchangeably the right of common in all waste grounds within the limits of the manor, and also in Ensham, Fawler, Charlbury, Northleigh, Ditchley, Kiddington, and Glympton; but from the different inclosures that

have taken place, by act of parliament, this privilege is now wholly lost; nor has any allotment been made in lieu of it, except in one or two instances.

The Customary tenants of Handborough, Combe, and Bladon, were bound to cut and make all the grass growing in Woodstock park, for which every township was to have sixpence in money, or two gallons of ale. The customary tenants of Hordley, by tenure, were to sweep and make clean all the chambers in the manor house, as often as the king visited it, for which they were to receive two *castes* of bread, and two gallons of ale; and the owner of the manor place of Combe in like manner was to clean all jakes and privies within and about the king's manor of Woodstock.

The Lord of Staunton Harcourt, by tenure, was to find four browsers in Woodstock park, at any time when the snow should fall and lie for the space of two days, in order to furnish provisions for the deer; and every browser was allowed to carry to his lodging, as long as the snow lasted, a billet of wood, every night, the length of his axe-helm, and to be borne on his axe's edge. The king's bailiff of the hundred of Wootton was to give warning of the browsers being wanted, by blowing a horn at the manor gate of Staunton Harcourt, on which he was to be served with a *caste* of bread, a gallon of ale,

and a piece of cheese; and the said Lord of Staunton Harcourt, as a compensation, was to have one buck in summer, and one doe in winter, out of Woodstock park.

The tenants of the seven demesne towns, and the town of Woodstock were used and bound to drive and keep the deer for view, as often as the king should come to his manor of Woodstock, or his majesty should order his game to be viewed by any other person, without any fee or reward.

The customary tenants of the demesne towns were bound to carry the hay growing on the meads in Woodstock park to the king's barn, for the support of the deer in winter, for which they were to have sevenpence a day; and to be allowed, on going home, to carry off as much hay as would lie in the bed of their carts.

WOODSTOCK.

THE ancient borough of WOODSTOCK, which gives the title of Viscount to the Duke of Portland, is situated on an eminence, near the banks of the Glyme, and enjoys every local advantage that can contribute either to health or pleasure. The amenity of the situation, indeed, can only be exceeded by the purity of the air, which is so great, that valetudinarians have frequently been recommended to breathe it.

Here Woodstock, erst amid the sylvan scene*,
Lifts her high brow, and, happy, smiles serene:
Woodstock, belov'd by DIAN's huntress train,
What time those shades confess'd the goddess' reign.

Woodstock was a borough by prescription, long before it was incorporated, as appears by the rolls of parliament. In 1453, it received its first charter from Henry VI. This has been confirmed, enlarged, or altered by Edward IV. Henry VII. Edward VI. Elizabeth,† James I. and

* It was formerly within the limits of *Whichwood Forest*.

† The charters of Edward VI. and Elizabeth, were recovered, in August 1813, by the writer of this, then for the third time Mayor of the Borough, from that oblivion and decay, in a damp cellar, to which it appears they had many years ago been ignorantly or carelessly consigned. They are now deposited with the other existing charters, in the muniment chest of the Corporation, and have received less injury than might have

Charles II. The charter granted by the latter, is that under which the Corporation now act, and is almost the counterpart of that of New Windsor. A restrictive charter forced upon the borough, in the fourth of James II. was soon after set aside by proclamation, when the former franchises were restored.

ABSTRACT of the principal privileges and exemptions of the Borough of New Woodstock, from the charter of Charles II.

I. The Corporation, under the style and title of the Mayor and Commonalty of the Borough of New Woodstock, is to enjoy the same liberties and free customs which the burgesses of New Windsor use and enjoy.

II. A Mayor and a sergeant at mace are to be chosen, annually, on the Monday before the feast of St. Matthew the Evangelist; at which time two Chamberlains are also to be elected from the Common Council, to serve for the next year.

III. The Corporation and Freemen are exempted from toll in all boroughs, vills, and demesnes, throughout the whole kingdom of England.

IV. The Mayor, &c. is to have the power of settling all matters within the borough, of fixing the assize of bread, and regulating the markets.

been expected. A beautiful portrait of Queen Elizabeth, in black and white, adorns the initial of her charter.

V. The Corporation is to consist of five Aldermen, one of whom is to be Mayor, a High Steward, a Recorder, two Chamberlains, and a Common Clerk, with fifteen capital Burgesses, making in all twenty-five.

VI. The Corporation assembled in their Guildhall, have power to make laws and regulations for the better improvement of the vill, which are to be binding.

VII. The Mayor may hold a court of record on Monday, from fortnight to fortnight—now held only on the first Monday of every month.

VIII. Aldermen and Common Council are to serve for the term of their natural lives, unless they resign, or are removed for ill behaviour.

IX. The High Steward, Recorder, and Common Clerk to be approved by the King, before they can act.

X. The Magistrates to have the power of trying all and every kind of felony, *witchcraft*, *enchantment*, &c. but not to determine any matter touching the loss of life or member, without the King's special commission.

XI. The Mayor, Aldermen, High Steward, and Recorder to be justices of the peace; and under a warrant signed by any two of them, persons accused of crimes may be committed to the county gaol, and no county justice can interfere within the borough.

XII. It may and shall be lawful for the Mayor and Commonalty to choose two Burgesses to serve in Parliament.

Though this privilege is now given optionally, yet by a former charter, this borough was specially exempted from being compellable to send two members, out of royal grace and favour, on account of the expense attending the exercise of this franchise, when representatives were paid for their service in parliament.

The present representatives are the Honourable George Eden, and Sir Henry Watkin Dashwood, Bart. of Kirtlington Park, in this neighbourhood.

The Duke of Marlborough is High Steward and James Blackstone, Esq. LL.D. is Recorder. Several Recorders of this borough have been Justices of Wales.

The parish or chapelry of New Woodstock, including the adjacent hamlet of Hensington, both appendant to Bladon, contains about two hundred and fifty houses or separate tenements, and upwards of fifteen hundred inhabitants.

Within these few years, the town has been much improved, both in buildings and the respectability of their occupiers; and in many essential respects, it is impossible to find a more desirable residence, especially for persons retiring from the bustle of business with moderate

fortunes, or for those who wish to live on a limited income, in a comfortable, unostentatious manner. The beauty and facility of the promenades offer advantages superior to the command of a carriage in most other places; as the whole town is so compact, that the most remote part of it is within five minutes walk of Blenheim Park. The situation is one of the most central in the kingdom, the roads are good, the means of conveyance numerous, and rent, rates, and taxes, under all circumstances, peculiarly reasonable.

The SEAT of Pryse Pryse, Esq. and the RECTORY, both commanding beautiful views over the lake and the northern part of the park, are universally admired for their situation; while HENSINGTON HOUSE, the residence of James Blackstone, Esq. as it possesses every advantage of pleasing prospects, ornamental grounds, and other rural appendages, forms one of the most desirable villas in this vicinity.

Among the ornaments, however, of this place, whether viewed in a moral or an architectural light, may be reckoned the elegant ALMS-HOUSES, near the entrance of the Borough, from Oxford, erected and liberally endowed in 1797, by Caroline Duchess of Marlborough, for six poor widows.

Power, riches, and grandeur, are little to be envied, except when they are exerted to promote the less fortunate meritorious, and to relieve the

distressed. It is the exercise of those qualities alone that can render them amiable in the eyes of others, or a real pleasure to their possessors. May this example of beneficence serve as an incentive to others! *

* For wishing to preserve the following Sonnet, as an humble tribute of justice, truth, and gratitude, the Author trusts he shall find an apologist in every liberal mind. Flattery to the living never disgraced his pen; nor will it be supposed that a few wild flowers strewed on the grave, are grateful to the dead, though they may serve to evince the affectionate recollection of the feeling heart. The Duchess of Marlborough is now beyond the reach of praise or blame; but till the last pulse of life, her memory will be cherished by me, and her good deeds ought to be recorded to posterity, from which the impartial meed is certain.

To her Grace CAROLINE Duchess of MARLBOROUGH, on her Building and Endowing the Alms-Houses at Woodstock.

In deep affliction's rigid science bred,
 Bent by calamity's oppressive rod,
 How many sink the meek submitted head,
 Hopeless of help—save only from their God!
 The widow weeps—the orphan droops unseen,
 And fortune's favourites stand with cold averted mien.
 Yet know, the selfish heart that cannot feel,
 On wealth or power, for pleasure leans in vain;
 While social sighs and kindred tears reveal,
 A bosom formed for rapture's blissful reign.
 'Tis this, O MARLBRO'! that will gild thy name,
 Thy heart delight in retrospective view,—
 Gain virtue's meed—give pure and lasting fame,—
 “That want and widow'd age, a refuge find in you.”

The immunities and franchises conferred on this borough, by the favour of our ancient sovereigns, will be seen from the foregoing ABSTRACT, to be very considerable. Queen Elizabeth in particular, was a great benefactor; she bestowed on the Mayor and Commonalty four shops, and thirteen cottages, formerly belonging to the dissolved chantry of our Lady, founded in Woodstock chapel by King John, in 1210; and also confirmed the grant of Henry VI, of a certain marsh, called the Lee Pool, now converted into fertile meadows, which let for about five guineas per acre.

The TOWN HALL is a stately modern stone edifice, standing in the most favourable situation for effect; and was built at the sole expense of the present High Steward.

The MARKET HOUSE, which has recently undergone a complete repair, is likewise eligibly situated, and sufficiently adapted for its destination. The markets are well supplied with provisions; and a considerable share of business, especially in the corn trade, is usually transacted on Tuesdays, the principal market day. A Friday's market, the grant of Elizabeth, is too much neglected, both for the real benefit of dealers and of the inhabitants. From causes of this kind, towns frequently date their decay; for markets, which naturally excite *competition*, soon encourage com-

bination by disuse. It is everywhere the duty of magistrates to guard against this.

The CHURCH, or CHAPEL, more properly speaking, has a modern front, and a handsome new tower, with a ring of eight well toned bells, and a set of melodious chimes, which go every four hours, and play a different tune for every day in the week. It contains an organ, and is well pewed, and well attended.

It is of ancient foundation, has long been parochial, and is presented to, with the rectory of Bladon, of which it was originally considered as an occasional chapel of ease, probably served by the chantry priest; though, from the change of times and circumstances, and the loss, alienation, or neglect of endowments, it is now become very onerous and expensive to the Rector of the mother church.

Notwithstanding the ancient celebrity of the place, there are few monuments deserving notice, if we except that to the memory of Dr. King, Dean of Raphoe, and his son, Captain James King, the friend and coadjutor of Captain Cook, in his last voyage, part of the history of which was written at Woodstock: nor are the inscriptions remarkable for elegance, with the exception of that on the small tablet, which records the late rector, Dr. Thomas King, Chancellor of Lincoln, which is equally simple and beautiful.



The COAT ARMOUR, CREST, and SUPPORTERS, of the town of New Woodstock, were thus blazoned by Richard Lee, Esq. in 1574.

Arms. In a field, gules, three stags' heads cabossed, and the stock of an oak tree in base, argent, a border of the second charged with oak leaves, vert.

Crest. On a helmet waper issuing out of a coronet ducal, an oak tree, proper.

Supporters. Two wild men with their clubs proper, mantled gules, doubled, argent.

Motto. RAMOSA CORNUA CERVI.—*The branching horns of the stag.*

A GRAMMAR SCHOOL was founded and endowed here, in 1585, by Mr. Cornwell, a native of the place, under a royal licence from Queen Elizabeth. The Corporation are *Trustees*. The master must be a person in holy orders. The School-room, which is large and lofty, received a complete repair in 1811; and every thing has been done on the part of the Corporation, which the funds allowed, to render this useful establishment a real benefit to the place.

The INNS furnish the best entertainment and accommodation to travellers of every description. These are the BEAR, MARLBOROUGH ARMS, ANGEL, &c. Lying on the great Irish Road, the inns are full of business, at all seasons of the year, though more particularly during the spring,

summer, and autumn, when Blenheim presents its diversified and ever varying attractions to visitors, whether on purpose or incidentally. As a proof of the facility of its communication with most parts of the kingdom, especially with the metropolis, nearly a dozen stage and mail coaches pass and repass daily, to and from London, besides two Woodstock coaches, called the *Old* and *New* BLENHEIM, both through WYCOMBE, and another coach, called the *Defiance*, through HENLEY. Waggon's are likewise frequent; besides Bellenger's Woodstock waggon's, thrice a week, almost the best known of any that travel this road, from the great length of time that they have been established, and the respectability and punctuality of their proprietors.

The principal manufactures are polished STEEL and GLOVES, and in both branches, the peculiar excellence of their fabrics has gained them distinguished pre-eminence. In one respect, they have left the fable of Midas no longer an object of wonder: at their touch, the old nails of a horse-shoe are converted into articles of infinitely greater price, according to their weight, than the purest gold. A chain made here, weighing only two ounces, was sold in France for £170 sterling. The manufacture of polished steel was introduced here by a Mr. Metcalfe, about the beginning of the last century; but is now much declined, on account of the cheapness of the Bir-

mingham and Sheffield wares, though in elegance still unrivalled ; and with more prosperous times, which are now about to commence, will it is to be hoped, revive again. The glove trade, however, is extremely flourishing, and employs many hands. Nearly 500 dozen pairs are made weekly in the town, and the neighbouring villages. The delicacy of the leather and the neatness of the workmanship, distinguish the Woodstock gloves and fancy articles from all other.

A very respectable BANK has for some years been established here, under the firm of Messrs. R. Cox, J. Morrell, R. F. Cox, and R. Morrell.

About thirty years ago, in pulling down an old building near the church, several pieces of ancient coin were found, and among them, two of the Emperor VESPASIAN, with this inscription round the head, in characters very legible and neat : VESPASIANUS ROM. IMP. AUG. On the reverse, JUDÆA CAPTA. Indeed Roman coins are still casually found here. That nation indubitably had several stations in this vicinity, and probably one at this place ; * Alecti Castra, or **ALCHESTER** on the Akeman, was less than ten

* On digging in a place called the Back Acre, in 1810, behind the premises belonging to Mr. Mavor, Solicitor, in Oxford-street, Woodstock, a small urn, evidently of Roman manufacture, was discovered in a bed of ashes, within two or three feet of the surface, and is now in the possession of the writer of this.

miles distant ; and the tessellated pavement near Stonesfield, as well as the Camp on Callow Hill, in the same parish, are unquestionable vestiges of that once potent people. But this is not intended as a work on antiquities—if it were, the field is open, and probably may yet be traversed,

Before Decay's effacing fingers

Have swept the lines where beauty lingers.—BYRON.

Yet who would prefer exploring the earth for urns, rusty coins, and half obliterated castrametations, to the contemplation of recent art and blooming nature, arrayed in their gayest dress, and captivating with their brightest charms !

To the Botanist, the vicinity of Woodstock presents a rich variety of plants, many of which are either curious or scarce. The CHERWELI, the GLYME, and the EVENLODE, each produces its appropriate aquatics. In Blenheim park too, and its immediate environs, the general stores of Flora are extremely extensive and various.

From giant oaks, that wave their branches dark,

To the dwarf moss that clings upon their bark.—DARWIN.

The Orchideæ in particular, seem the denizens of the soil : very few of the family are wanting. The following LIST of the more rare plants, will it is hoped, be grateful to the Botanical Student. Few of the CRYPTOGAMIA class are included ; yet no district in the kingdom can offer a greater variety.

ALPHABETICAL CATALOGUE OF PLANTS.

ACHILLÆA Ptarmica	Brionia alba
Adonis autumnalis	Bunium bulbocastanum
Ajuga reptans	Butomus umbellatus
Alisma ranunculoides	Campanula trachelium
Anagallis tenella	————— rotundifolia
————— arvensis (flore cæ- ruleo)	Cardamine amara
Anemone nemorosa	Cerastium aquaticum
Anthyllis vulneraria	Chelidonium majus
Antirrhinum cymbalaria	Chironia centaurium
————— spurium	Chlora perfoliata
————— majus	Circæa lutetiana
Aquilegia vulgaris	Cistus helianthemum
Arenaria trinervia	Colchicum autumnale
Artemisia Absinthium	Cornus sanguinea
Asperula odorata	Convolvulus sepium
————— cynanchica	Cratægus aria
Asplenium ceterach	————— torminalis
————— ruta muraria	Cynoglossum sylvaticum
————— trichomanes	
————— scolopendrium	Daphne laureola
Astragalus glycyrriza	Dipsacus sylvestris
Atropa belladonna	
	Echium vulgare (flore albo)
Betonica officinalis	Epilobium hirsutum
Bidens cernua	————— villosum
	————— montanum

Epilobium tetragonum	Lychnis flos cuculi (flore pleno)
Erica vulgaris	Lycopsis arvensis
Erigeron acre	Lysimachia vulgaris
Ervum tetraspermum	Lythospermum officinale
Eupatorium cannabinum	Lythrum salicaria
Euphrasia officinalis	
——— odontites	Malva moschata
	Medicago sativa
Fragaria vesca	Melampyrum pratense
Fritillaria Meleagris	Melissa calamintha
	Menyanthes nymphoides
Galeobdolon luteum	——— trifoliata
Galium cruciatum	Monotropa hypopithys
——— palustre	Myriophyllum verticillatum
——— procumbens	
——— uliginosum	Narcissus pseudo-narcissus
Genista Anglica	——— biflorus
——— tinctoria	——— poeticus
Gentiana campestris	Nepeta cataria
——— amarella	Nymphæa alba
	——— lutea
Hedysarum onobrychis	
Hippocrepis comosa	Oenanthe fistulosum
Hippuris vulgaris	Ononis spinosa
Hottonia palustris	Ophrys apifera
Hypericum pulchrum	——— aranifera
——— hirsutum	——— muscifera
——— quadrangulum	——— spiralis
	Orchis bifolia
Iberis amara	——— conopsea
Iris pseudacorus	——— latifolia
	——— maculata
Lactuca scariola	——— mascula
Lathræ squamaria	——— morio
Lathyrus aphaca	——— pyramidalis
——— sylvestris	——— ustulata
Leucojum æstivum	

Ornithogalum luteum

Orobanche major

Orobanchus tuberosus

Oxalis acetosella

Parnassia pulustris

Pedicularis palustris

———— sylvatica

Pinguicula vulgaris

Polygala vulgaris

Polygonum bistorta

———— amphibium

Polypodium vulgare

———— filix-mas

Potamogeton natans

———— crispum

———— lucens

Poterium sanguisorba

Prunus padus

Ranunculus flammula

———— hederaceus

———— lingua

———— sceleratus

Rumex acetosella

Sagittaria sagittifolia

Salvia verbenaca

———— pratensis

Sambucus ebulus

Samolus valerandi

Sanguisorba officinalis

Sanicula Europæa

Saponaria officinalis

Satyrium viride

Saxifraga granulata

Scabiosa succisa

Scutellaria galericulata

Sedum dasyphyllum

———— telephium

Serapias grandiflora

———— latifolia

———— longifolia

Sherardia arvensis

Sysymbrium amphibium

Solanum dulcamara (flore
albo)

Sorbus aucuparia

Spartium scoparium

Spergula nodosa

Spiræa filipendula

Stachys Germanica

Symphytum officinale

———— patens

Thalictrum flavum

Tilia Europæa

Tormentilla erecta

Trifolium flexuosum

Turritis hirsuta

Tussilago farfara

———— petasites

Typha latifolia

Valeriana officinalis

———— dioica

Veronica officinalis

———— serpyllifolia

———— scutellata

Vicia cracca

———— sylvatica

Vinca minor

ITINERARY

OF SOME OF THE
MOST FREQUENTED ROUTES FROM WOODSTOCK.

No. I.

To London, by Wycombe.

	Miles from Woodstock.	
Oxford		8
Wheatley-bridge	6	14
Tetsworth	8	20
Stoken Church	4	26
West Wycombe		
High Wycombe	7	33
Beaconsfield	5½	38½
Uxbridge	8½	47
Hayes	3	50
Tyburn Turnpike	12	62

REMARKS.

Though this road is four miles nearer the Metropolis than the following, it is much less frequented. The views from Stoken Church hills are certainly very fine; but after passing Wycombe, the road runs indeed, along a rich campaign, but uninteresting country to London, without either near or remote objects to amuse the eye.

No. II.

To London by Henley.

Oxford		8
Nuneham Courtney	5	13
Dorchester	4	17
Benson	3	20
Nettlebed		
Henley on Thames	11	31
Hurley		
Maidenhead	9	40
Salthill		
Slough	5½	45½
Colnbrook	4	49½
Cranford Bridge		
Hounslow	7½	57
Brentford		
Hyde-park-corner	9½	66½

This road in many places runs parallel with the Thames, or catches views

of its meanders. Both at Henley and Maidenhead we cross this prince of British streams by two noble modern stone bridges; and every where the landscape is agreeably diversified by hill and dale, woods, plains, and splendid edifices, among which latter, Windsor Castle towers with a proud pre-eminence.

No. III.

To Reading.

Oxford		8
Wallingford	13	21
Pangbourn	9	30
Reading	6	36

The Thames accompanies the traveller the greatest part of this road which every where presents the most, enchanting features, and in some places is almost unrivalled. READING is one of the most pleasant county towns in the kingdom.

No. IV.

To Birmingham and Holyhead.

Enstone		6
Chapel House	4	10
Shipston on Stour	10	20
Stratford on Avon	11	31
Henley in Arden	7½	38½
Hockley	5	43½
Birmingham	10½	54
Wolverhampton	13½	67½
Shiffnal	12½	80
Watling Street	6½	86½
Shrewsbury	12½	99
Oswestry	17½	116½
Llangollen	12½	129
Corwen	10	139
Kernioge Mawr	13	152
Betws Ycoed	11	163
Capel Cerrig	4	167
Bangor Ferry	17½	181
Gwyndu	13	194
Holyhead	12½	209½

Few Tours of pleasure could be selected, that comprise more pleasing or important objects; STRATFORD, the birth-place of *Shakspeare*; BIRMINGHAM, "the toy-shop of Europe;" and the sublime scenery of NORTH WALES, successively claim regard, and beguile the length of the journey.

No. V.

To Worcester and Aberystwith.

Enstone		6
Chipping-Norton	5	11
Moreton in Marsh	8	19
Broadway	8½	27½
Bengeworth (<i>Evesham</i>)	5½	33
Pershore	7	40
Worcester	9	49
Bromyard	14	63
Leominster	12	75
Presteign	14	89
New Radnor	8	97
Rhayadr	18½	115½
Cwm Ystwith	14½	130
Aberystwith	15	145

If the former route is calculated to give an agreeable picture of NORTH WALES, this is no less favourable for a display of some interesting parts of SOUTH WALES; besides affording the Traveller an opportunity of seeing the beautiful city of WORCESTER. ABERYSTWITH is much frequented as a sea-bathing place.

No. VI.

To Bath, by Cirencester.

Witney		8
Burford	7	15
Bibury	10	25
Cirencester	7	32
Tetbury	10	42
Petty France	8½	50½
Cross Hands	5½	53½
Bath	12	65½

Persons from London who annually travel the Bath road, as it is called, beautiful as the country must be allowed to be through which it passes, in time become tired of the same uniform round; and therefore to vary the scene, many either go or return by WOOD-

STOCK and OXFORD. The difference in the distance is more than compensated for, by the novelty and magnificence of the objects which this route displays.

No. VII.

To Bristol.

Cross Hands, as above		53½
Sodbury	3	56½
Bristol	11½	68

Health, pleasure, and business, all in their turn, conduct to Bristol, which once ranked as the second commercial town in Britain.

No. VIII.

To Cheltenham and Gloucester, by Stow on the Wold.

Chapel House		10
Stow on the Wold	9	19
Cheltenham	18	37
Gloucester	10	47

During the Summer, the resort of genteel company to Cheltenham, has been regularly increasing; the numbers now are about 3000 in the season.

No. IX.

To Cheltenham and Gloucester, by Burford.

Witney		8
Burford	7	15
Northleach	9	24
Frogmill	7	31
Cheltenham	6	37
Gloucester	10	47

This road, though it has been longest established, and is most frequented, in point of distance is the same as the preceding from Woodstock.

No. X.

To Coventry and Litchfield, by Banbury.

Deddington		10
Adderbury		
Banbury	6	16
Southam	14	30

Coventry	13	43
Coleshill	12	55
Litchfield	15	70

The road through Banbury is much less frequented than it deserves, being generally excellent, and passing through a pleasant country, sufficiently varied to enliven the progress. COVENTRY and LITCHFIELD are too well known to require a description of their attractions.

No. XI.

To Southampton.

Oxford		8
Abingdon	6½	14½
East Ilsley	11	25½
Newbury	9½	35
Whitchurch	13	48
Winchester	13	61
Southampton	12	73

No route can be more delightful than this. WINCHESTER, SOUTHAMPTON, and its vicinity, and the ISLE of WIGHT, with its charming scenery, are of themselves sufficient to allure every person of taste to visit them.

No. XII.

To Gosport.

Winchester, as above		61
Wickham	14½	75½
Gosport	9	84½

The pride and defence of Britain, the royal navy, which has one of its principal stations at Portsmouth, adjoining Gosport, will always occasion a frequent communication between the midland counties and this place.

No. XIII.

To Northampton & Peterborough.

Middleton Stoney		8
Brackley	9½	17½
Towcester	11	28½
Northampton	9	37½
Wellingborough	10½	48
Thrapstone	10½	58½
Oundle	8	66½
Peterborough	13½	80

Neither business nor pleasure renders this road much frequented; yet it is not uninviting, nor destitute of attractions. NORTHAMPTON is a fine town; and the country for many miles along this route is rich, and well cultivated, if not picturesque.

No. XIV.

To Buckingham and Cambridge.

Middleton Stoney		8
Buckingham	15	23
Stoney Stratford	8	31
Newport Pagnell	6	37
Bedford	13½	50½
St. Neots	12½	63
Cambridge	18	81

Next to BLENHEIM, perhaps no place in the kingdom is better worth visiting than STOW, the seat of the Marquis of Buckingham, which lies in the vicinity of the town of that name.

No. XV.

To Salisbury and Weymouth.

To Newbury, No. XI.		35
Andover	16	51
Salisbury	17	68
Woodyates Inn	10	78
Blandford	12½	90½
Dorchester	16	106½
Weymouth	8	114½

SALISBURY, with its splendid cathedral, and the wonders of STONEHENGE which lie in its vicinity, are very attractive objects in an excursion to WEYMOUTH, which may be considered as the *regal* bathing-place, as BRIGHTON is the *princely*.

No. XVI.

To Brighton, by Windsor and Tunbridge Wells.

Slough, No. II.		45
Windsor	2	47
Kingston	12	59
Croydon	11	70
Farnborough	8	78
Sevenoaks	7	85
Tunbridge	13	98

Uckfield	14	112
Lewes	8	120
Brighton	8	128

Travellers to BRIGHTON from this part of the country generally pass through LONDON: but when it is considered that for a little additional expence they can visit WINDSOR and TUNBRIDGE by the route proposed, and at the same time avoid the hurry and noise of the Metropolis, many without doubt will be inclined to prefer it.

No. XVII.

To Warwick.

Stratford on Avon,		
No. IV.		31
Warwick	8	39

The road through Banbury and Kington is nearly the same distance; that through Halford Bridge is about two miles nearer. Warwick Castle is a most capital object, and worthy of its generous and benevolent possessor.

No. XVIII.

To Aylesbury.

Bicester		11
Aylesbury	16	27

This road is little frequented; but it is by no means destitute of attractions in fine weather.

No. XIX.

To Derby and Sheffield, by
Birmingham.

Birmingham, No. IV.		54
Sutton Coldfield	7½	61½
Litchfield	10	71½
Burton on Trent	10½	82½
Derby	11	93

Peacock Inn	14	107
Chesterfield	10½	117½
Sheffield	12½	130

The elegance of Litchfield, the picturesque beauties of Derbyshire, and the manufactures of Sheffield, will render this an interesting route. It also communicates both with the West and the North roads to Scotland.

No. XX.

To Liverpool by Birmingham and
Litchfield.

Litchfield, as above		71½
Wolseley Bridge	9½	81
Sandon	8	89
Trentham	9½	98½
Newcastle under Line	3	101½
Congleton	12½	114
Knutsfield	14	128
Warrington	12	140
Prescot	10	150
Liverpool	8	158

In population, Liverpool is the third place in the kingdom, and in foreign commerce it is only inferior to London. A regular stage coach runs through Woodstock to this place, and there is abundance of posting.

No. XXI.

To Manchester.

Warrington, as above		140
Irlam	9½	149½
Manchester	8½	158

Manchester, though it is not even a borough town, contains more inhabitants than any place in the kingdom, except London. Its cotton manufactures are the wonder of the world.

NOTICES
TO
PARTIES OF PLEASURE.

THE UNIVERSITY of OXFORD is certainly the principal object of attraction in the vicinity of BLENHEIM, and will amply repay the traveller for allotting a day or two to an inspection of the colleges, libraries, paintings, and other curiosities. After this, the elegant seat of EARL HARCOURT, at NUNEHAM, justly claims pre-eminence. Other capital objects, which are deservedly included in a tour of pleasure to Blenheim, are DITCHLEY, the beautiful mansion of the Right Hon. LORD VISCOUNT DILLON, which has been recently fitted up in a style of great magnificence, and contains some fine paintings, chiefly portraits; and HEYTHROP, the agreeable seat of the EARL of SHREWSBURY, in the road to which ENSTONE WATER WORKS may be visited.

STOW, the magnificent domain of the Most Noble the MARQUIS of BUCKINGHAM, though situated in another county, and at the distance of twenty miles, may likewise be indicated in a tour of this part of the kingdom; and no traveller of taste ought to miss the opportunity of paying it a visit.

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